

RUGBY UNION
MAKE OR BREAK
TIME FOR THE
ENGLISH CLUB

Redgrave
to ship
oars after
Olympic
Games

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Too late
or too late

THE TIMES



30p

No. 65,552

FRIDAY APRIL 12 1996



Retired early
All-rounder Richard
Cake could have
been the next
CB Fry. Instead
he's joining ICI
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Why Nazi hunter
Simon Wiesenthal
will never let
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Too old to die
Hellraising rocker
Paul Westerberg
explains why he
loves the quiet life
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First attack on Beirut for 14 years

Israeli raid may delay peace talks

By Ross Dunn in Jerusalem and Our Foreign Staff

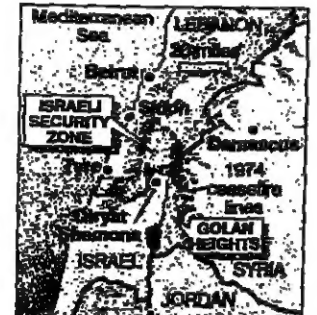
AT LEAST five people were killed yesterday when Israeli helicopter gunships fired rockets into the southern suburbs of Beirut in a revenge attack against Hezbollah guerrillas. It was Israel's first raid on the Lebanese capital for 14 years.

The attacks appear likely to delay the next stage of the Middle East peace process: agreement between Syria and Israel. Though Lebanon is not directly involved in the process, the country has a heavy Syrian military presence. The attacks may well give Damascus the excuse to delay further the negotiations.

The Clinton Administration last night urged all parties to show restraint but refused to condemn Israel's action. "Fundamentally the problem is created by [Hezbollah's] rocket attacks into northern Israel," Warren Christopher, the US Secretary of State, said. Those had created a "very dangerous situation" and "the parties ought to recognise that the way to resolve this problem is for those rocket attacks to be stopped".

General Amiram Levine, the top military commander in northern Israel, said that the military operations could last several days.

Shimon Peres, the Israeli Prime Minister, ordered the assault after Hezbollah fired rockets into northern Israel on



Tuesday, wounding 36 people, and killed a soldier in the occupied border zone on Wednesday.

Three Israeli Apache helicopter gunships attacked the Shia Muslim suburbs where the Iranian-backed fundamentalist Hezbollah has offices and many of its leaders live, the Lebanese Army said. A 60-year-old man was killed and at least two other civilians were wounded. After a lull of several hours, an Israeli Cobra helicopter also fired rockets at an abandoned house in south Lebanon.

The Israelis struck targets in the southern border region, the eastern Bekaa Valley and the fringes of the suburbs of Beirut itself. Two civilians died and four others were wounded when their car was hit by a missile near Sidon. Another civilian was killed

and one was wounded when three missiles hit the village of Shur. Another car was hit in a helicopter raid in the Tyre region, wounding the driver.

A Lebanese army soldier was also killed and three were injured in a separate helicopter raid on an anti-aircraft post on the outskirts of Tyre. Mohsen Dallul, the Defence Minister, said Israeli artillery shelling wounded two more civilians.

Ehud Barak, the Israeli Foreign Minister, and a former military chief of staff, said no area of Lebanon was immune from such attacks so long as Israeli citizens had to take shelter from Hezbollah fighters operating in the south of the country.

Hezbollah leaders threatened to hit back at Israel "and burn the earth" under its feet.

Faris Bouez, Lebanon's Foreign Minister, said he was considering launching a complaint with the UN Security Council after the Israeli attacks. "If Israel means peace then it is destroying it today and it's contributing to more tension in the region," he said.

Syria confirmed its comments to a radio broadcast which said that Israel has misjudged the situation and jeopardised its chances of peace with Damascus. At this stage Israel is counting on Syria's official reaction as being little more than rhetoric.



Seven-year-old pilot Jessica Dubroff and her father, Lloyd, who were killed yesterday

7-year-old girl pilot killed in record bid to cross America

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

A SEVEN-year-old girl who was attempting to fly across America was killed yesterday when her single-engine Cessna crashed.

Jessica Dubroff died instantly when the plane hit the ground soon after it had taken off in bad weather in Cheyenne, Wyoming, at the start of the second leg of the trip. The Cessna came down in a residential area but no houses were hit. It appeared that the pilot may have steered the aircraft away from homes, so that it crashed in a road.

Jessica's father, Lloyd, a business consultant, also died in one of the Cessna's two rear passenger seats. The other victim was Joe Reid, a flight instructor, who was at Jessica's side in order to meet aviation authority requirements. Solo flight is not permitted by children under the age of 16.

A witness, Ron Nimmo, said that the Cessna was circling but suddenly went into a dive. The victims were taken to hospital but were declared dead on arrival.

The Cessna had taken off in rain, hail and wind. It was not known who was at the controls when the plane crashed. Jessica flew in to Cheyenne on Wednesday evening, executing a fair landing after a wobbly approach. She was greeted by a crowd of schoolchildren who held placards saying "Good Luck, Jessica". On the day before her flight began she said she had slept for only two hours, "because I was so excited".

The record-breaking attempt began on Wednesday afternoon at Half Moon Bay

airfield near San Francisco, California. Jessica had devised her own flight path, charting a 6,500-mile route over the Rockies, the vast Midwestern and the Great Lakes. She intended to land in Falmouth, Massachusetts, where her family once lived.

The Cessna's controls were altered to suit the girl's short limbs. Before starting her journey, Jessica announced: "I'm going to fly until I die." She first rode in a small plane on her sixth birthday when she was allowed to take the controls briefly, and from that day she was hooked. Despite having an instructor at her side, she intended to do all the flying. In the event of Mr Reid having to take the controls in an emergency, Jessica would

There are few sights crueler than loving parents working on their own image of reflected glory. Norris McWhirter on the deadly urge to break records. Page 14

have had to repeat that leg of the journey in order to qualify as a transcontinental pilot.

Child aviation has become increasingly common in America with parents anxious to see their young assume the airs of adulthood, and at the same time perform to the peak of their abilities. The record for youngest airborne navigation across north America is held by nine-year-old Tony Allengene, who achieved the feat in 1988.

The Guinness Book of Records recently stopped publishing child aviation records, for fear of an accident.

Labour the centre party, Blair tells US

By Peter Riddell in New York

LABOUR has become the party of the centre, speaking for the mainstream majority, Tony Blair said yesterday as he sought to show that his party had transformed itself and was ready for office.

His speech, to 600 businessmen at the British-American Chamber of Commerce in New York, marked a further big step in his attempt to distance new Labour from its

past. In remarks that will increase the doubts of the Labour Left about his aims, Mr Blair said that Labour had stripped "outdated ideology" from its values and freed the party from "the excess influence of pressure and interest groups". Nowhere in his speech did the word socialism appear.

Instead, he presented new Labour as a "party of the centre as well as the centre-left". He said: "A radical centre is needed to answer the competitive challenges for the economy while enhancing social stability and coherence."

Mr Blair argued that the old solutions of Left and Right no longer applied and he believed that the centre could be fertile ground for radical policies.

The extremes whether of Left or Right simply will not meet. Continued on page 2, col 5



German airport fire kills 15

At least 15 people were reported killed and more than 100 injured when a fire broke out in a flower shop at Düsseldorf international airport, fire fighters and police said.

Many of the casualties were overcome by thick smoke. The terminal was evacuated and the airport closed to all air traffic, police said. Page 11

Separation for Marina Ogilvy

By Alan Hamilton

MARINA MOWATT, daughter of Princess Alexandra and Sir Angus Ogilvy and a cousin of the Queen, has separated from her husband after six years of marriage. It was announced yesterday.

Mrs Mowatt, aged 29 and 30th in line of succession to the throne, married her photographer husband Paul, 32, in 1990 when she was six months pregnant, and amid reports of opposition from her parents. The couple now have two children, aged six and three.

A statement issued on behalf of the couple by solicitors Max Bittel Greene yesterday blamed the separation on long-standing marital difficulties, and emphasised that no one else was involved. "Both Marina and Paul are very sad that this situation has been reached, and both are now intent that the interests of their



Marina Ogilvy: very sad

Egypt seizes Cunard liner that hit reef

By Jonathan Prynne, Transport Correspondent

THE Egyptian Government has impounded the Royal Viking Sun luxury cruise liner in the Red Sea port of Sharm el-Sheikh as a bargaining counter in its dispute with Cunard over damage to a protected coral reef.

The public prosecution office in Cairo confirmed yesterday that the 37,845 tonne ship will not be allowed to leave Egyptian waters until the company has met its demands for \$23 million (£16 million) compensation.

The ship was crippled last Thursday when she struck a reef near the island of Tiran while negotiating the narrow Gulf of Aqaba, and is now anchored off Sharm el-Sheikh.

Divers from the Egyptian environmental protection agency have reported severe damage to the reef, which forms part of the protected Ras Mohamed marine national park. Cunard is contesting the

cost of the damage, which greatly exceeds previous fines against owners of boats that have damaged the coral. The heaviest such fine before the Royal Viking Sun accident was about £14,000.

Bill Spears, a Cunard spokesman, said that lawyers representing the company's insurers would meet Egyptian Government officials at the weekend to sort out the dispute. A senior Cunard source said he believed the company's insurers would be able to negotiate the Egyptian authorities' figure down.

The company is flying its own diver and a coral expert out to assess the damage.

The 500 passengers, including 54 Britons, who were on board the Royal Viking Sun when she hit the reef were flown home at the weekend and have been offered a 14-day cruise on other ships as compensation.

SATURDAY IN THE TIMES



Forty pages of men's fashion, in the Magazine

Paul Heiney's new column for cooks, in Weekend

Seven days of TV and radio, in Vision

PLUS
Weekend Money,
Car 96 and 1015 for young Times readers



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Labour move to lure businessmen into classrooms 'dangerously naive'

Teachers sceptical over Dad's Army school invasion

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR moves to attract middle-aged businessmen into teaching were criticised by the profession yesterday for failing to tackle an impending recruitment crisis.

Heads teachers and union leaders doubted that older people would return to the classroom in sufficient numbers to dent the requirement for 30,000 new teachers a year by the end of the century. The "Dad's Army" scheme was given a cool reception at its launch at the annual conference of the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers.

David Blunkett, the Shadow Education Secretary and architect of the scheme, appeared ready to backtrack after his speech to the conference in Glasgow. "The great attraction of the idea is that if it does not work, you have lost

nothing. If it does not work, so be it." He said mid-career transfers from business and industry would go hand-in-hand with incentives for graduates to enter teaching as well as extra pay for proven "super teachers". He told the conference: "It is a nice idea that those who have made their mind somewhere else will want then to give their time to teaching. I am assured by some of them they do."

But Professor John Howson, of Oxford Brookes University, who has carried out a series of studies on teacher employment, said the proposals were "dangerously naive". Little more than half of the 800 people aged 45 or more who trained to be teachers in 1993 ended up in the profession. "Recruitment for secondary schools hit the buffers two years ago," Professor Howson

said. "What the profession actually needs is more people in their twenties, but if new graduates find teaching unattractive, what kind of people are we going to get transferring in their forties?"

Mr Blunkett said yesterday that sabbaticals of up to a year for long-serving teachers would be another incentive to enter teaching under a Labour government. The break could be used by teachers after 15 years' service, to spend time in industry or research. Last night it was claimed this could cost at least £300 million a year for supply cover if all 18,000 teachers with 15 years' service opted for a sabbatical.

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the NASUWT, welcomed the idea of sabbaticals but did not think the Dad's Army scheme would work. "Those people will be aware that youngsters of today are very different from what they were 30 years ago. They are less respectful of authority and to be a teacher these days you have to have a lot of vigour. It would be a very stiff challenge for them."

John Dunford, president of the Secondary Heads' Association, said: "We want the best young graduates coming into the profession. Bringing in 55-year-olds from industry will not solve the huge teacher shortage coming in the next two or three years."

Mr Dunford said 50,000 new teachers would be needed every year by the turn of the century. The cost of training these people would be far better invested attracting and training graduates to spend a lifetime in teaching, he said.

James Paice, a junior Education and Employment Minister, said Mr Blunkett's scheme for a sabbatical for long-serving teachers would cost the country £5 billion if every eligible teacher took a year off. A Labour spokesman said, however, that sabbaticals would be gradually phased in with industry contributing some of the cost.



Nigel de Gruchy, left, and David Blunkett at the union's conference in Glasgow

Child abusers beat ban to work as supply staff

By DAVID CHARTER

CHILD abusers banned from teaching are being allowed back into schools by unscrupulous teacher supply agencies, a classroom union said yesterday.

Tight new regulations are required to stop agency teachers on a government blacklist from sidestepping screening checks, delegates at the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers annual conference, which is taking place in Glasgow, were told.

A survey by the union found that one in four head teachers did not know whether security checks had been made on supply teachers sent to them by agencies. In one instance, a teacher who had been sacked and placed on the Department for Education's blacklist, known as List 99, was sent back to a primary school by an agency. Local authorities are

legally obliged to check the list and criminal records of all teachers but corner-cutting agencies can avoid the checks if they hire teachers on a self-employed basis.

Martin Johnson, a supply teacher in Lewisham, south-east London, said: "One of our members found someone teaching in a primary school he knew had been forced to resign from another school and put on List 99. The Government had made the decision he was not fit to teach and yet the man was back in the classroom. The majority of people on List 99 have a question mark about abuse of children."

He said that in another case, Manchester education authority had to write to schools warning that an agency representative was himself on List 99.

The union called for regulations to require the checks which it claimed were routine

ly ignored by some agencies. Screening was said to be often overlooked for the hundreds of supply teachers from Australia and New Zealand on agency books.

Delegates also said the growing use of agency teachers would drive down standards.

Mr Johnson said: "Pupils in one school had 13 science teachers on a most, most of them from abroad, with no knowledge of the national curriculum."

Brian Garvey, a member of the union's national executive from Yorkshire, said: "This Government complains about 15,000 unsuitable teachers in schools on the one hand, and yet fully endorses this casualisation of the teaching profession."

"This drives down teacher quality by employing anyone from off the streets anywhere in the world," Mr Garvey said.

Judge says jailing of patient was absurd

An Old Bailey judge said yesterday it was "absurd" for a psychiatrist to refuse to allow a second medical opinion on a suicidal mental patient, which resulted in him being sent to prison instead of hospital.

Sydney McBride, 49, who has a history of severe depression, had tried to burn himself to death and had admitted arson. He was sentenced to four years. Judge Laughton, QC, told him: "I very much regret that I cannot order a disposal which would more closely address your need for treatment but because of the attitude of a doctor I am unable to do so." Dr David Somekh surprised the probation service and defence lawyers by the move.

Bridgewater trial doubts

A second juror in the Carl Bridgewater trial said yesterday that she believed the four men convicted of the killing were innocent. Lucinda Graham is to support the campaign to have the case sent back to the Court of Appeal. Miss Graham, the youngest member of the jury in 1979, said she had doubts from the start. Michael Hickey, his cousin Vincent Hickey and James Robinson were convicted largely on a confession by Patrick Molloy.

Leeds killing denied

A young man arrested for the murder last weekend of a pensioner who was attacked in his car as he stopped to ask directions, denied in court yesterday that he was the killer. Clive Jones, 25, was arrested on Tuesday in connection with the death last Saturday of Steven Popovic, 74, who was prominent in the Serb community in the Chapeltown district of Leeds. Mr Jones, who lives in Gipton, West Yorkshire, was remanded in custody for a week.

Nursing staff arrested

A female nurse and a male nursing auxiliary have been arrested in connection with "serious allegations" after an internal inquiry at Bolton General Hospital. John Pettigrew, director of nursing, said: "The allegations relate to the care of three male patients on one of the psychiatric wards." The arrests come 18 months after a separate inquiry into the abuse of psychiatric patients resulted in seven nurses being suspended and three later sacked.

Canterbury tails off

Canterbury Cathedral fell in popularity in the year it introduced admission charges. The number of visitors fell to 1.9 million, down from 2.25 million the year before. A charge of £2 for adults and £1 for children, the unemployed and pensioners was introduced last June. Officials said the hot summer, parking problems and French strikes affected the number, which equalled that of visitors to St Paul's in London.

Suspect in Philippines

The former lodger of a missing Essex businessman and his wife has been arrested in the Philippines. Geoffrey Paston was arrested at a nightclub he runs in the city of Tacloban by immigration officials, accompanied by two officers from Essex Police. Mr Paston is wanted for questioning about the disappearance of David Sims, 51, from Southend, and China Rose, 31, his Filipina wife, who have not been seen since the early months of 1993.

City wins £15m grant

The Arts Council of England awarded a National Lottery grant of £15 million towards the upgrading of the Victoria Concert Hall and the Regent Theatre in Stoke-on-Trent. The improvements are part of the council's plan to create a "cultural quarter" in the city, which will include a touring venue for ballet, drama, opera and music theatre. Seventy-four grants totalling £28.16 million were distributed yesterday.

First taste of summer

The first English strawberries of the summer of 1996 are on their way to the shops this weekend, earlier than ever before. Despite the late spring, the latest improvements in growing techniques have urged the crop forward by at least ten days. Vernon Emery, of Warsash, Hampshire, gave his plants 15 minutes of artificial light each hour from 11pm until 7am from mid-January, triggering the growth that produces earlier and larger fruit.

Mother rescues children

A mother plucked her two children and their friend to safety after driving onto a rail crossing as two trains approached from opposite directions. Kim Turner, 32, from Leonfield, East Yorkshire, had edged onto Scarborough crossing near Beverley although warning lights were flashing. She grabbed the children and leapt from the car, which was badly damaged as it was hit by one of the Sprinter trains.

Oasis cut concert

Extra police were called in yesterday after the rock band Oasis walked out abruptly during a concert in Canada, sparking fears of a riot by thousands of angry fans. The concert had just begun at the Coliseum in Vancouver when the band suddenly stopped playing and left the stage, apparently because someone had thrown a shoe onstage. Sergeant Bob Chapman of the city police said: "There were no reports of injuries."

Labour 'at centre'

Continued from page 1: the real challenges. A modern party must be in the centre, speaking for the mainstream majority."

In the past Mr Blair has presented new Labour as being in the centre-left, so his reference to the centre is a further step in the repositioning of the party, in line with his claims that Labour is the party of One Nation.

Mr Blair argued that the role of "a modern centre and centre-left government is to equip people and business for change, to enable and empower, not to direct and control. A government of the radical centre, offering real and dynamic change but doing it from a centre-ground position, taking people with us, recognising that unless we combine change with equity, change will not come."

Mr Blair backed his claim both by referring to changes in the structure of the Labour Party itself and in its policies, mentioning in particular its intention to keep public spending under tight control while making a top priority of lowering tax at the bottom end of the scale.

He argued that while the values and priorities of the

main parties would continue to differ, they would draw from the same "pot of policy prescriptions". Tax reform, he said, could be a message of both Left and Right, as could welfare reform.

In his speech, Mr Blair emphasised that it was absurd to imagine that, for Britain, "there is a choice between the relationship with Europe and that with America. On the contrary, the real value to the US of the British role in Europe lies in the influence we can and will exert to help keep Europe firmly linked to the US in defence, outward-looking, open to trade and investment, and open also to the inclusion of the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe."

He spoke of his strong belief in free-trade policies, calling for further action to deal with barriers to trade and investment across the Atlantic.

The Labour leader reinforced his claims to a new approach by saying that new Labour accepted many of the changes brought in in the 1980s under Conservative governments which were needed to improve competitiveness and encourage enterprise.

Irritated Tories, page 9

Social worker backtracks on drugs

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

THE social work director who caused a storm of protest by describing Ecstasy as safer than aspirin yesterday declared drug misuse "illegal and unsafe".

Mary Hartnoll's original comments were described as "unwise" by senior officials at Glasgow City Council yesterday. The council has called an emergency meeting.

Miss Hartnoll, 55, caused outrage among drug rehabilitation workers with an internal memo to the chief executive of the council describing Ecstasy as "relatively safe". She also said in the memo that the risk of dying from a normal dose of aspirin was "very much greater" than that of dying from Ecstasy.

She had been responding to a headline approach on drugs by the council's licensing board, and her opinions appeared to contradict the work

being done by the board. Yesterday, however, Miss Hartnoll said: "I would never condone the taking of Ecstasy or any illegal drug."

The council moved to limit the damage to its image by declaring its commitment to combat the drugs threat in the city. Drug abuse claims the lives of about 100 young people in Glasgow every year.

Robert Gould, leader of the council, said: "Ecstasy is not a relatively safe drug." He said, however, that he would not be calling for Miss Hartnoll's resignation and that she retained the confidence of the council.

Mr Gould said he had sympathy for views of the father of Leah Betts, the teenager who died after taking Ecstasy. Paul Betts said that Miss Hartnoll's remarks were "totally irresponsible".

Mr Gould said yesterday:



Hartnoll: started her £76,000 post recently

"If I were Leah Betts's father or mother I would probably be talking the same way but if you look at the detail of what is being said, Mary Hartnoll is probably not far off the mark."

The deputy leader of the Council, Gordon MacDiarmid, said Miss Hartnoll's statement was "very irresponsible in relation to public

perception but it was not an irresponsible statement to make in an internal memo" given its context and its audience.

Miss Hartnoll, who took up her £76,776 a year council post recently, said: "I am surprised and disappointed that one sentence in an internal memo has been so widely misinterpreted and taken out of context."

"The social work department, under my leadership, has played a full and active part in the Greater Glasgow Drugs Action Team, whose first priority is to turn the tide of public opinion against illicit drug-taking and to make it socially unacceptable, an aim I fully endorse."

She added later: "My view is that there is no such thing as a safe drug, but the risk of death from Ecstasy is perhaps not that high, although there are a lot of other health risks involved."

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Ogilvys' daughter leaves husband

Hello! casts evil spell on another 'happy' marriage

By Alan Hamilton

THE curse of *Hello!* has struck again. Paul and Marina Mowatt are the latest in a procession of high-profile couples to have publicly pledged their troth and their boundless happiness in the pages of the mass-circulation weekly, only to find their marriage subsequently in tatters. The Duke and Duchess of York tried it once and it did them no good at all.

Marina Ogilvy, daughter of Sir Angus Ogilvy and Princess Alexandra, was 24 and 24th in line to the throne when, in 1989, she found herself pregnant by her boyfriend Paul Mowatt, a young photographer with no shred of royal connection.

They are the latest in a long line of royal couples to face a failed marriage. They have witnessed the separation of the Princess Royal and Captain Mark Phillips, the Prince and Princess of Wales and the Duke and Duchess of York.

The Times understands that yesterday's statement by solicitors was issued to pre-empt a Sunday newspaper, which had intended to publish details of the couple's marriage breakdown this weekend.

Shortly after her pregnancy



Paul Mowatt: said to have been paid £100,000

was confirmed, Marina sold her story to the now-defunct *Today* newspaper, claiming that her parents were so horrified by the prospect of the first illegitimate royal birth this century that they had forced her into the choice of abortion or shotgun marriage.

Marina, in the event, chose marriage. But the style of the ceremony was far removed from that of her parents in Westminster Abbey. Paul and

Marina were married at St Andrew's Church, in Ham, southwest London, before a congregation of 30, among whom there were no royal family members other than the bride's parents. The bride wore black.

Their daughter was born and named Zenouska, a name her parents confessed they had made up during a game of Scrabble. The couple seemed happy, and Marina told newspapers how much better life was outside the Royal Family. She even made sympathetic noises towards the Prince and Princess of Wales when their formal separation was announced in 1992, saying how well she understood the pressures of life in the royal goldfish bowl.

But all was not well on Marina's home front. Even *Hello!*, which prefers its domestic horizons to be entirely unclouded, reported in its November 1992 interview with the couple that a serious rift remained between them and Marina's parents. In two years, Zenouska had seen her grandparents for a total of 15 minutes, despite living in a semi in Teddington, only ten minutes' drive from Princess Alexandra's home at Thatched House Lodge in Richmond

Park. When a second child, Christian, was born in 1993, there appeared to be something of a family reconciliation. Paul Mowatt, who had been unwelcome in the Ogilvy family home since the marriage, was received into the fold. Sir Angus Ogilvy and Princess Alexandra attended a joint christening of their two grandchildren in the Chapel Royal of St James's Palace,

lent for the occasion by the Queen.

But even that event was not without its repercussions. Paul, who had already incurred royal displeasure for selling photographs of his wife wearing thigh-length boots and a tinsel crown and brandishing a gun while corgis snapped at her feet, dug himself deeper into royal opprobrium for selling the story

and pictures of the christening to *Hello!* for a reputed £100,000.

The couple, who have recently been living together in a cottage in Yorkshire, have been obliged throughout their short married life to make a living as best they can. Three years ago, Marina further distanced herself from the Royal Family by agreeing to write a regular column for the

Sunday Express. It was not a success, and the House of Windsor does not like its members, even those in the lower twenties of the succession table, to muddy their hands with rough trade.

Marina's belief that the secret of happiness lay in escape under the Windsor wire to the fresh and airy world outside has, sadly, not lived up to expectations.



Marina Mowatt leaving her home in Teddington, southwest London, yesterday with her son Christian

Two held on killing ordered by a fax

By Kate Alderson

POLICE hunting the killers of an accountant shot four years ago on the orders of an American millionaire have arrested two men.

David Wilson, 47, was murdered by two hooded men at his home in Withnell, Lancashire, in March 1992. Mr Wilson, who was married with two daughters, had become involved in a multi-million-dollar cigarette deal with Michael Austin, a wealthy New York fraudster.

Austin, 40, ordered the execution of Mr Wilson by fax from New York after the accountant began to threaten the success of his empire. He was extradited from the United States and convicted of murder at Carlisle Crown Court last year. He was sentenced to life imprisonment but has appealed.

On Wednesday night two men, both English and in their thirties, were arrested at their homes by a team of Lancashire detectives helped by the Metropolitan Police and the Kent Constabulary. The men, one from Northfleet, Kent, and the other from south London, were taken to Lancashire for questioning.

Superintendent Bob Denmark, who led the international search for the killers, said: "These arrests were the logical conclusion of four years of investigations. I anticipate charges connected with the killing of David Wilson will be brought."

Tory MP's lost sleep costs royal hall £1,600

By a Staff Reporter

A COMPLAINT by the Conservative MP Nicholas Winterton that loud music from a band next door to his London flat stopped him sleeping cost the Royal Horticultural Halls a £1,000 fine yesterday for noise pollution.

The thumping beat from an awards function for *The Grocer* magazine at the halls in Westminster was "terribly loud", Mr Winterton, MP for Macclesfield, told council officers, Horseferry Road Magistrates' Court heard.

Through its managing director, René Dee, the Royal Horticultural Halls Ltd admitted failing to comply with a notice under the 1974 Control of Pollution Act to abate a noise nuisance. The company was also ordered to pay £626 costs.

Alex Cranbrook, for Westminster council, said the notice had been served after complaints from residents of flats next to the halls, where a concert was taking place. Later, Mr Winterton, 58, who has a flat in the same block, complained and officers who had gone to his address were able to hear the music before midnight even with the windows closed.

After hearing the halls were 62 years old and not properly sound-proofed, Ros Keating, a magistrate, commented: "In those years, we didn't have the sort of music we have now."

Mr Dee told the court that the company had now stopped taking bookings for music and dancing functions.



Adams: "Residents might watch for novelty value"

Residents tune in to real-life crime

By Paul Wilkinson

VIEWERS on a crime-ridden estate in South Yorkshire who are bored with the usual stuff on television can switch to real-life sex, drugs and violence on their own doorsteps.

A £25,000 closed-circuit system being installed in Doncaster is linked directly to the TV sets of residents. Council officials hope the project will turn the occupants of 450 flats into their own security guards and cut the rising level of trouble at the 30-year-old St James Street estate. Similar schemes in Camden, north London, and Hartlepool, Teesside, achieved dramatic cuts in vandalism and thefts.

Terry Adams, tenants' association chairman on the estate, said: "We have been plagued with problems for years and this means people will be able to see what is happening and tell the police. Car thefts and break-ins in the parking areas have been a problem but one of the main sources of trouble

is when gangs get inside the blocks.

"Because the lobbies are secluded there have been gangs of boys and girls, drinking, glue-sniffing, taking drugs and having sex. With the cameras we will be able to see what happens and telephone for the police without fear of intimidation. Residents might even tune in for the novelty value."

Doncaster council, which shares the installation and running costs with South Yorkshire Police, said the cameras would not see inside individual homes. "The system will not be linked either to local police or our own central control room but directly into spare channels on the residents' TVs through communal aerials."

Bev Marshall, the council housing chairman, said: "This system will enhance the security arrangements and hopefully reduce the levels of nuisance and crime, allowing people to use the communal areas without fear."

Hardman Vinnie sees red at Dutch order of the boot

By Richard Duce

VINNIE JONES, English football's most notorious exponent of the late tackle, is no stranger to the red card but none has come swifter than his embarrassing exit yesterday from an international conference on fair play in sport.

Jones would probably admit his inclusion as a speaker at the Amsterdam conference had smacked of the bizarre. But he was not happy to be snubbed by officials who insisted his name was not on the guest list.

Exit Jones to his hotel room and an early bath while he waited for an explanation from the organisers of the conference, sponsored by the Dutch Government. The organisers insisted Jones's exclusion had nothing to do with his hardman reputation. He had, instead, they claimed, been invited only to take part last night in a television recording with his fellow



Jones: excluded from conference on fair play

professional Eric Cantona and the Formula One drivers Damon Hill and Michael Schumacher, to be shown across Europe today.

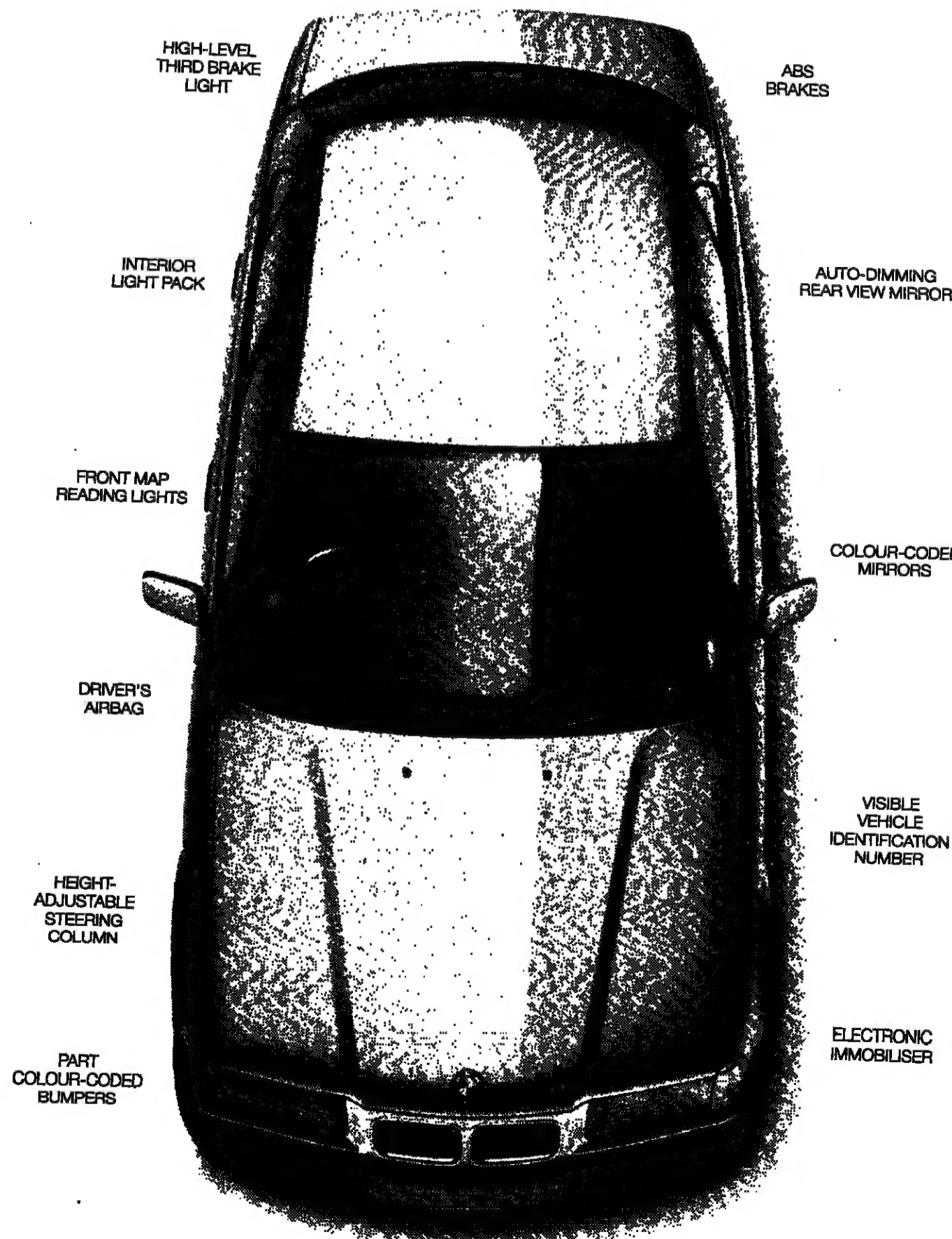
Steve Davies, Jones's agent, was unconvinced and flourished an invitation from Erika Terpstra, the Dutch Sports Minister and former

Olympic swimmer. It stated: "It is my great pleasure and honour to invite you to the round-table conference. Your presence will underline the importance of the object of the meeting."

Jones said his exclusion was a "ridiculous cock-up. If you want to know about coal, ask the people who are digging it out."

The Wimbledon player insists he has mellowed despite being sent off recently for fouling the Chelsea footballer Ruud Gullit, whom he called a "speaking pig". "When I started playing I was only 20. Now I am older and more educated. We all learn by our mistakes."

Jones has been sent off 12 times in his career, more than any other English league footballer, and attracted fines totalling more than £26,000. Gullit has been declared European ambassador for sport, fair play and tolerance — a title that Jones said was well-deserved.



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Costs grow over plan to curb BSE

Cattle slaughter may be doubled to 30,000 a week

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

PLANS to kill up to 30,000 cattle a week are to be announced by the Government next week in the first stage of a rescue package for the beef industry, it emerged yesterday. That is double the number initially thought necessary under last week's Luxembourg agreement with the European Union to keep all cattle older than 30 months out of the food chain.

Investigation by the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Farmers' Union has revealed that the number of steers and heifers, prime beef cattle, which are older than 30 months is much higher than was thought. This means the Government will not be able to limit the destruction to the 15,000 normally slaughtered every week at the end of their productive life.

Thousands of prime cattle just over 30 months old will also have to be destroyed because they cannot now be used for food. Younger animals are extremely unlikely to be infected with BSE, the "mad cow" disease.

Richard Macdonald, the NFU's director-general-designate, said: "It is impossible to

determine exactly how many cattle fall into what we are calling this 30-plus category, but it could be around 250,000 a year — far more than we thought."

These animals include cattle reared for export which are slaughtered at a later age to satisfy foreign demand for heavier carcasses. Some of the best beef also comes from slow-maturing breeds fed almost entirely on grass and often killed as late as 36 months. Meat from these animals is now banned if they are older than 30 months.

Farmers say the Ministry of Agriculture has made problems worse by using tooth development as the test of cattle age. Any animal showing more than one pair of incisor teeth is deemed to be older than 30 months, but farmers say a second set of incisors often appears in heifers younger than that. Proving an animal's real age can be difficult because until very recently there was no systematic recording of the birth dates of heifers. The Ministry says it is trying to come up with a solution.

The NFU has told the

ministry that it calculates there is now a backlog of up to 100,000 old cows and a further 100,000 younger animals more than 30 months old awaiting slaughter on farms. Clearing this backlog could mean destroying as many as 30,000 animals a week for up to six months.

Douglas Hogg, the Minister of Agriculture, could announce the cull next Tuesday, according to Whitehall sources, and the first cattle could be slaughtered before the end of the month.

Details of the plan are still being finalised. These include levels of compensation and the logistics — there is no shortage of slaughter capacity but the nine licensed livestock incinerators cannot handle more than 3,000 whole carcasses a week. One idea under discussion is that the heads, backbone and offal would be incinerated. The rest of the carcasses would be boiled down by rendering plants which specialise in processing animal waste. The residue could then be incinerated or buried in special landfill sites. Mr Macdonald said: "The logistics of the operation are a



An animal rights activist at the gate of the Aalten slaughterhouse, where the Netherlands calf cull began

huge problem. There will be a tremendous catch-up job. Some sort of queuing or rationing system may have to be introduced to allow for a phased destruction of the animals."

The NFU said it was pressing for extra compensation for farmers who would lose prime beef cattle. Under the Luxembourg deal, farmers would get

an average of about £480 per animal, a figure based on the market rate for an old and barren cow. Prime beef animals can be worth more than £1,000 each.

Extra compensation would create difficulties for the Treasury. The EU agreed last week to pay 70 per cent of compensation at a rate of £480 an animal, but it is understood

that any compensation above that rate would have to come entirely out of the Government's pocket.

In addition to the destruction of animals over 30 months old, the Government is also committed to produce proposals by the end of this month for a more selective cull of cattle and/or herds identified as being at the most risk of

developing BSE. There is no indication yet how many animals this might involve.

The NFU is considering a legal challenge to the EU's worldwide ban on £600 million, on the ground that it is disproportionate to the scientific evidence, but will make no legal move for three weeks to give the EU more time to review the ban.

Protests greet cull of calves in Holland

ANIMAL rights activists shouted "murderers" yesterday at the beginning of the mass destruction of 64,000 British calves in the Netherlands.

Escorted by police vehicles, four trucks transported the first load to the Kropveld-Schipstal slaughterhouse in Aalten, where up to 2,000 a day will be killed for up to six weeks. Animal rights and vegetarian groups laid wreaths against the walls.

The drastic mass slaughter was announced last month by the Dutch Agriculture Ministry, after British scientists said there was a possible link between mad cow disease and deaths from the human equivalent, Creutzfeldt-Jakob Syndrome.

In France, a government investigation reported six cases of fraud over the origin of beef imported into France in the last two weeks. In two cases out of 2,000 checked, British meat imported before a French ban was on sale labelled as French meat. Four others involved Dutch and German meat which was sold as French, said junior finance minister Yves Gallez in a statement on the results of his ministry's investigation. Legal proceedings had been launched in all six cases, he said.

France was the first country to suspend imports of British beef, on March 21.

Psychological Society

Degree grading 'biased and open to abuse'

By DOMINIC KENNEDY

UNIVERSITY examiners are assessing students in a way that is "unreliable, inconsistent, biased and open to frequent abuse", the president of the British Psychological Society said yesterday.

Professor Stephen Newstead said only a radical overhaul would prevent the degree system falling into disrepute. One essay, given to 14 different examiners, received marks ranging from a First to a borderline Lower Second or Third-class degree.

Professor Newstead, of Plymouth University, said examiners were influenced by their personal like or dislike of students whose work they were marking. But his experiment had shown that, even without knowing the candidate, the marks awarded for the same piece of work could differ by 70 per cent.

National examinations were needed as part of all university degrees to halt the erosion of faith in institutions that produce too many good results, Professor Newstead said. He feared Britain could follow the United States, where many qualifications are regarded with scepticism by employers and academics.

"Students don't always get the degree they deserve," he said at the society's annual conference in Brighton. "The system is undermined if degrees don't mean the same thing in different institutions. The reputation of British higher education is potentially undermined." Professor Newstead doubted that a First

Class degree meant the same now as it did 10 or 20 years ago. "In the past 15 years there has been an inexorable increase in the proportion of Firsts from 6 per cent to 10 per cent. It could be that students are getting better, or that teaching methods have improved to such an extent that students are performing much better than their counterparts in the past. But even if this is the case, it does not explain why the proportion of good degrees has gone up so much at a time when the participation rate has increased so dramatically."

About 30 per cent of 18-year-olds enter higher education, compared with only 5 per cent some 20 years ago. "It is difficult to believe that the proportion of these modern students who merit a good degree is so much higher than the proportion of their more highly selected predecessors."

There are wide variations in the number of good degrees awarded in different disciplines, with philosophy, history, sociology and English students getting better awards than accountancy, mathematics, education and law. Professor Newstead said there was also evidence of sex bias in marking, with women tending to get fewer Firsts and Thirds than men, particularly at Oxford and Cambridge.

Professor Newstead called for academics to be banned from assessing projects which they have supervised, as already happens with PhD theses.

Computers 'strike fear into young'

By DOMINIC KENNEDY

YOUNG computer-users, often presumed by their parents to have been born to wander cyberspace, are more intimidated by new technology than older generations, researchers have found.

According to a study by Strathclyde University, those in their thirties are eager to learn computer skills and feel confident about their ability.

Despite being brought up on computers, many young people can feel fearful at the thought of using them. Some even develop a condition known in America as "computer phobia", experiencing dizziness and nausea when surrounded by them and a wish to smash the machine.

Nicholas Bozonenelos, a psychologist, told the British Psychological Society conference that he had compared a group brought up in the 1970s — 165 trainees in management, aged from 30 to 43 — with a group brought

up in the computer-dominated 1980s — 47 undergraduates aged from 18 to 23. Younger people were 95 per cent more likely to be apprehensive about computers. Women were twice as likely to worry about computers as men. A larger experiment involving 440 people shows similar initial findings.

"The findings are astonishing. If they are substantiated, it suggests that the younger generation may avoid computers, may underperform and may even sabotage new computers in the workplace," Mr Bozonenelos said.

One theory is that younger people are overwhelmed by the amount of computer technology available and fear they will have to learn all of it to get through life. The young also associated computers with mathematics, which they found difficult at school.

People in their thirties and forties know they only had to learn a few computer applications to help them at work.

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Union accuses Barclays of putting workers at risk by not revealing threat from blackmailer

Police comb bank records for clue to parcel bomber

BY PATRICIA TEHAN
AND STEWART TENDLER

LISTS of disgruntled customers and former staff were being checked by police last night in the search for the Barclays bomber.

The bank confirmed it had handed over lists of aggrieved clients, including failed businessmen who blame the collapse of their firms on the bank. Detectives believe the bomber could be a businessman with a military or engineering background, or a bank employee who was sacked or made redundant.

The police and bank have placed newspaper advertisements appealing for the bomber to get in contact. This month he wrote to the *Daily Mail* threatening more attacks and claimed he was part of a group of disaffected bank victims.

In the past 16 months the bomber, who calls himself Mardi Gra, has made threats and sent or planted about 25 home-made devices aimed at Barclays and Barclaycard. Three have gone off, and one clerk suffered minor injuries.

A spokesman for the bank said: "We are co-operating with police and helping them in any way we can. I am sure people will understand it is important this man is caught. We have talked to the police about a number of possible lines of inquiry."

The bank was accused by unions yesterday of putting

14 MONTHS OF ATTACKS

December 5, 1994: Bank clerk injured by letter bomb at Hampstead High Street. Five more bombs sent same day to other west London branches. Addressed with a label saying *Welcome to the Mardi Gra Experience*.

December 6: Bomber wrote to Barclaycard headquarters in Northampton with first demand for money. Bank was told to communicate through the personal columns of *The Daily Telegraph* using the codename Mardi Gra. He always responded with untraceable letters.

May 1995: Another black-mail demand as devices were sent to people or companies working for Barclaycard and Barclays. June 19: Barclaycard security official received device made with shotgun cartridge. July: Some devices posted

to home addresses and others put through the letterboxes of companies in an arc south of London from Kent to Surrey including a greengrocer and a merchant builder. Another appeal put out for the bomber to get in contact.

August: Another written demand from the bomber. September: Devices left in telephone boxes near Barclays branches in west London. One device left in a case outside a branch at Hayes was thrown into the road and exploded as car drove over it.

January: More devices left outside branches including one in Ealing, west London. Others planted in south London. In the past two months, another advertisement has been placed by the bank seeking contact with bomber, who threatened more attacks.

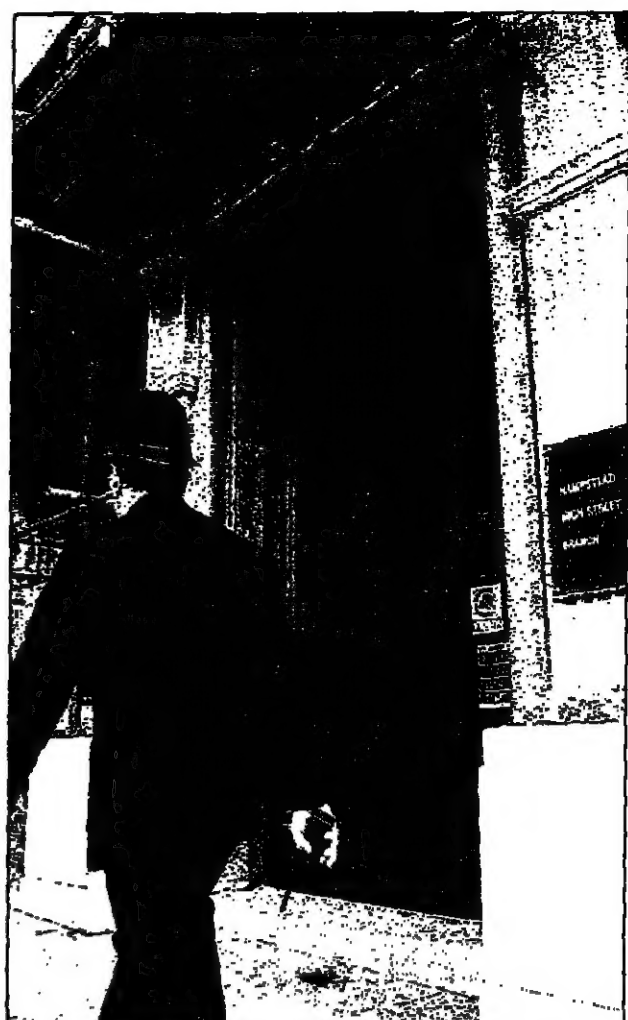
it has enemies. Banks are highly unpopular and they are an easy target."

Andrew Buxton, the bank's chairman, said staff had received "regular warnings about letter bombs and raids and keeping vigilant generally. You have to appreciate that this is against the background of a business that has a raid of some sort once a week, and a raid that might involve firearms perhaps once a fortnight. So our staff generally are extremely vigilant, and we do send out regular warnings."

"The warnings we have sent out have covered everything, and we have wanted to work with the police and keep the particular circumstances of this campaign silent. Looking back at the warnings we have given, I think actually they have been quite explicit."

Mike Pitcher, director of operations at Barclays, said the bank had not specifically mentioned the bomber because it had been "guided by the police. They are the experts. The police wanted to keep the number of people who knew about this to an absolute minimum because they thought it would give the perpetrator time to trip himself up."

Mr Pitcher said the bank had sent out at least 12 warnings to staff since the bombing campaign started in December 1994. These had provided information about the nature of devices and



Staff at Barclays branches were not told of the blackmailer but were given warnings on security

were in addition to other "very stringent security procedures".

"What we have done is remind staff of the need for continued vigilance." He said that staff also received regular training about security procedures.

Senior officers admitted yes-

terday that they had no strong leads on the identity of the blackmailer. The name Mardi Gra was printed on the cover of the video boxes containing the first bombs sent in 1994. Many of the bombs have been made with shotgun cartridges which explode when the box containing them is opened.

Cunning criminal driven by a powerful grudge

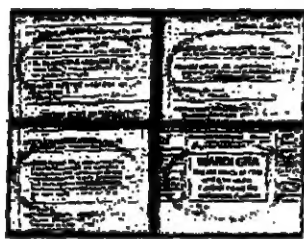
BY STEWART TENDLER

THE Barclays bomber is a cunning criminal with an engineering background who works alone and is driven by a powerful grudge against the bank or anyone connected with it, psychological profilers have told police.

Anti-terrorist detectives have consulted psychologists and bomb experts to build up a picture of the attacker which shows that he may have been a customer or worked for the bank and Barclaycard at one stage. He could still do so.

Some of the bombs were sent to the homes of bank officials, suggesting that he has had access to the bank's computer files. His obsession with Barclays is so strong that he has even attacked firms that supply the bank or have links with Barclaycard.

A Yard source said yesterday: "He is a loner with a clear specific grudge who possibly lives in London. He is a combination of the erratic and



the careful planner. He will go for long periods doing nothing which shows he is prepared to wait."

Experts think the bomber designed the bombs himself, which suggests a military or engineering background. He also built wooden boxes to hold some bombs. One investigator said yesterday: "The things are well engineered. There is skill in how they have been put together."

Yard officers have consulted FBI experts involved in the hunt for the Unabomber. A man was arrested by American police last week in connection with a 17-year campaign

against the spread of new technology that has led to three deaths.

Ted Kaczynski, arrested for the Unabomber attacks, led a solitary existence in the Montana hills. The Unabomber travelled across the United States striking at will. The Barclays bomber also struck whenever he chose. Police believe that he sometimes acted on the spur of the moment as he passed a building. "It is almost as if he drives around London and drops them off," said a police source.

The bomber's demands have been vague and he has never come up with detailed proposals on how money should be paid, yet he is familiar with forensic science techniques and has taken care not to leave clues. His contacts with police through newspaper personal columns have been designed to avoid entrapment. Police have tried to tempt him into making contact by telephone but he has resisted the bait.

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Skoda outshines German giants

British left standing by Japanese in car satisfaction survey

By KEVIN EASON, MOTORING EDITOR

CARS produced by traditional British manufacturers such as Ford and Vauxhall are rated among the worst in an authoritative survey on customer satisfaction launched yesterday. Rover fares slightly better in the J.D. Power league table, in which Skoda appears ahead of BMW and Mercedes.

The survey, which is regarded as the motorist's bible in America, checked the experiences of more than 14,000 owners of 1-registered cars in Britain. The result is a comprehensive survey of what motorists think of their cars and dealers. Carmakers are sceptical, however, pointing out that the research took place three years ago.

Skoda, which has been transformed by Volkswagen, its new owner, will no doubt eschew this point of view after scoring highest of the Europeans in a league table dominated by Japanese manufacturers.

Honda is rated as the best overall manufacturer, followed by Toyota, Mazda, Subaru, Daihatsu and Mitsubishi. The survey is a near disaster for British manufacturers: Power executives, while refusing to disclose the full list of 32 makes, confirmed that the big volume makers are "in the bottom third".

Of 72 models featured in the list, the highest placed British-made cars are Japanese — the Toyota Carina made in Derbyshire, the Honda Accord

from Wiltshire and the Nissan Micra and Primera models from Wearside.

The Rover 600 is the best-placed "traditional" British car, in 30th position, followed by the Jaguar XJ6 in 38th. Britain's best-selling car, the Ford Escort, is third from the bottom. Of the ten worst cars in the league table, six are Vauxhalls and two Fords.

J.D. Power UK, the company founder and president, said: "It is up to the manufacturers to take this information away with them and to use it to make major gains in their product quality."

"The Japanese led the way in the US but the domestic manufacturers changed their ways. When we started in 1985, US manufacturers would face 170 to 180 faults for every 100 vehicles they made. Now that figure is down to 50. Pressure from consumers helped them change their ways."

The survey shows 63 per cent of British owners are "very satisfied" with their cars compared with 77 per cent of owners in a similar survey in America.

Dealers fared much worse, with only 41 per cent of motorists being satisfied with the service they receive in the showroom and workshop. However, Dave Sargent, Power's director of European operations, said: "Poor product quality gives dealers a much harder task."

Roger King, public affairs director for the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, said: "This survey is judging cars from three years ago, since when the industry has made enormous strides. The results do not explain why the Ford Mondeo, for example, is on the preferred list in almost every other survey but scores badly in this one."

The answer, according to Power researchers, might be because the volume manufacturers sell to tougher customers, the fleet buyers, while Japanese manufacturers tend to sell more to private buyers.



Nirlev Sohal, daughter of VC winner Parkash Singh, visiting the exhibition yesterday with her husband Kanwal

Commonwealth heroes honoured

By JOHN YOUNG

NOTHING could stop Parkash Singh coming to the rescue of comrades under fire. Now his hard-won Victoria Cross is one of the most treasured items in an exhibition honouring millions of Commonwealth volunteers who came to Britain's aid in wartime.

On January 6, 1943, Sergeant Singh was serving with the 5/8 Punjab Regiment, as part of the 14th Indian Division in the Arakan region of Burma, when the Japanese opened fire on two disabled Bren-gun carriers. He drove his own carrier out and successfully rescued the crews.

Two weeks later, on January 19, he carried out an almost identical rescue of two other crews. He connected a chain to a third carrier, containing two wounded men,

A world record was set yesterday when decorations won by Major General Orde Wingate, right, leader of the Chindits in Burma, were sold for £56,500. The medals and memorabilia included his triple Distinguished Service Order, Colt revolver, Royal Artillery captain's tunic and a battered pith helmet. The collection was bought by an anonymous British collector at Sotheby's in Billingshurst, West Sussex, setting a record for non-Victoria Cross gallantry medals.



and towed it to safety under heavy anti-tank and machine-gun fire. The Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, presented Sergeant Singh's Victoria Cross six months later. After a

career in the Army he reached the rank of major and died in retirement, but his daughters, Nirlev and Jyoti, and granddaughter Mallika have been among visitors to the exhibition at the Imperial War Museum.

Field Marshal Lord Bramall, the former chief of staff, said at the opening that without the immense achievements of the Indian forces the war in Asia might never have been won.

In later life, when Mr Singh returned to the Punjab, he was known to everyone as VC. His daughters recalled, Nirlev lives in north-west London with her husband, Kanwal Sohal, a solicitor, and Mallika, their eight-year-old daughter.

The exhibition honours Commonwealth exploits in two world wars and in Korea. On a wall are the words of David Lloyd George after the First World War: "The causes of the war were unknown in India; its theatre in Europe remote. Yet India stood by its allegiance heart and soul from the first call to arms."

Luftwaffe joins Dad's Army in heritage battle

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH

THE Luftwaffe is to come to the aid of the Dad's Army that defended Britain against its onslaught, in an attempt to preserve Scotland's wartime heritage before it is too late.

The Defence of Scotland Project was launched in Edinburgh yesterday and Home Guard veterans have been asked to help the attempt to record the hundreds of pillboxes, gun sites and coastal

batteries which were vital to the national defence 50 years ago. Of vital assistance to historians are the hundreds of photographs of British defences taken by the Luftwaffe, now in German museums.

Many of the defences lie neglected and overgrown. Some were dismantled and others are under threat from erosion. The Army has no record of them and the Ministry of Defence no longer necessarily owns the land.

Doreen Grove, Historic Scotland's in-

spector of ancient monuments, said: "The most urgent record required is the recollections of the people who built and manned the defences. These remains are a vital but neglected source of historical information."

Stephen Wood, a military historian based at Edinburgh Castle, said 120 photographs taken from German aircraft during the war had so far been used and showed the defences with great clarity. German photographs

Basics put 5.6% more on typical food bill

By ROBIN YOUNG

THE cost of feeding a typical family has risen by 5.6 per cent in the past 12 months, according to research by the consultants Reward. Steve Flaher, of Reward, says that the rise can be attributed to increases in the price of staple foods, such as potatoes, apples and eggs.

Announced promotions include:

Asda: fresh beef sirloin steak £7.25 a kg, broccoli 50p a lb, strawberries 60p for 227g.

Budgens: fresh Cumberland pork sausages 99p for 454g, Filippo Berio extra-virgin olive oil £1.99 for 250ml, English Red apples 65p a kg.

Co-op: fresh Scottish salmon steaks £1.99 for 22g, cheeseboard selection tray £3.99 for £20g, pure orange juice £1.79 for 3 ltr.

Harrods: smoked salmon delice £2.95, Serrano ham £3.55 for 100g, kippers £3.10 a kg, mixed Dutch peppers £1.95 for four.

Iceland: breaded nuggets £3.79 for 50, part-boned chicken breasts £3.99 for 1.5kg.

WEEKEND SHOPPING

button sprouts 99p for 907g, strawberry and vanilla New York cheesecake £1.99.

Marks & Spencer: New Zealand lamb rib chops £7.49 a kg, Bakewell tarts 85p for two, croissants 99p for eight.

Morrisons: mini Melton Mowbray pork pies £1.49 for six, oysters 29p each, light coleslaw 39p for 227g.

Safeway: topside, silverside or top round with added basing fat £4.39 a kg, British crumbed ham 59p a 4 lb, New Zealand extra mature cheddar £2.19 a lb, grapefruit 29p each.

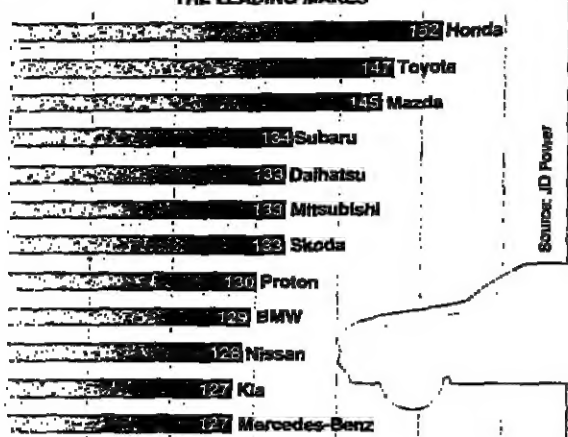
Sainsbury's: premium pork sausages £1.09 for 454g, mature blue Stilton £1.67 a lb, oranges £1.19 for eight.

Somerfield: fresh boneless leg of pork £2.99 a kg, tiger prawns £1.69 for 113g, cherry tomatoes 99p a lb.

Tesco: pork spare rib chops £2.79 a kg, braising steak £3.29 a kg, medium free-range eggs £1.41 for 12, frozen raspberry pavlova £1.79.

Waitrose: Aberdeen Angus sirloin steak £5.99 a lb, Royal Gala apples 49p a lb, new potatoes £1.29 for 2.5kg.

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Source: J.D. Power

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97 Honda Civic	84 Renault Laguna	77 Suzuki Vitara
92 Toyota Camry	84 Proton Persona	76 VW Polo
91 Mazda 323	83 Isuzu Trooper	76 Fiat Tipo
91 Mitsubishi Colt	83 Fiat Punto	76 Peugeot 106
91 Mazda 626	83 Rover 600	76 Ford Fiesta
90 Honda Accord	83 Mitsubishi Shogun	75 SEAT Ibiza
89 Subaru Legacy	83 Jeep Cherokee	75 Citroen AX
89 Subaru Impreza	82 Volvo 900	75 Fiat Cinquecento
89 Nissan Micra	82 Saab 900	74 Vauxhall Cavalier
89 Daihatsu Fourtrack	81 Audi 80	74 Rover 600
88 Skoda Favorit	81 Renault 19	73 Land Rover Discovery
88 BMW 5-series	81 Volvo 460	72 Ford Granada
88 Mitsubishi Galant	81 Jaguar XJ6	72 Renault Espace
88 Nissan Primera	80 Rover 200	72 Fiat Uno
88 Mercedes 200/300	80 Peugeot 306	72 Vauxhall Calibra
88 Saab 900	79 VW Golf	71 Vauxhall Corsa
88 Proton Mpi	79 Rover Metro	71 Vauxhall Astra
85 Nissan Sunny	79 Citroen Xantia	70 Ford Mondeo
85 Kia Pride	79 Rover 400	69 Vauxhall Carlton
85 Seat Toledo	78 Peugeot 405	68 Vauxhall Omega
85 Mercedes C-class	78 Renault Clio	67 Ford Escort
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85 Volvo 850	78 Citroen ZX	64 Lada Samara

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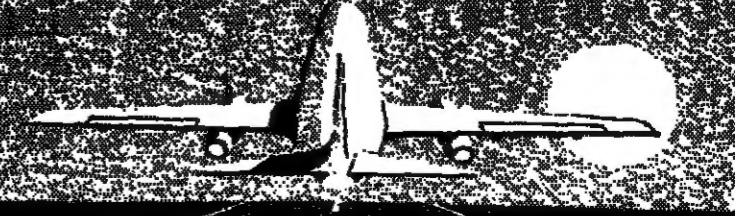
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Twins help search for cause of disorder

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Twins help search for cause of disorder

By Nigel Hawkes

OSTEOARTHRITIS, the commonest cause of joint pain, is partly inherited, a three-year study has shown. Until now the disease had been attributed to injuries and general wear and tear. But a research team from St Thomas's Hospital in London and the Institute of Molecular Medicine in Oxford reports in the *British Medical Journal* that there is a strong genetic component. The team compared the incidence of the disease in 250 pairs of identical and non-identical twins, and showed that between 39 and 65 per cent of the cases of osteoarthritis were attributable to genetic factors. The next target is to find the gene that predisposes towards the disease, to enable screening.



Identical twins Joan Robbins, left, and Joyce Shutes, whose condition was examined by the researchers

Scottish doctors may be authorised to allow death

By Gillian Bowditch

DOCTORS in Scotland who stop treating coma patients regarded as incapable of recovery, allowing them to die, will not face criminal prosecution for murder or culpable homicide, the Lord Advocate said yesterday.

The statement from the Lord Advocate, Lord Mackay of Drumadoon, was made in the Court of Session in Edinburgh yesterday as the case of Janet Johnston, 53, reached the final stages of a legal hearing that has lasted eight months.

Mrs Johnston, who lived in Ayr, Strathclyde, has been in a persistent vegetative state in Law Hospital, Carlisle, for four years after she took an overdose of her asthma medication. She is fed by nasal tube but breathes on her own and is not on a life-support machine.

Doctors said she had suffered two seizures, causing brain damage. Since then she has been kept alive by intensive nursing. She opens her eyes occasionally but has not reacted to stimuli.

The case has been brought by the hospital, which is arguing that doctors should be allowed to let Mrs Johnston die peacefully, with dignity and in the least possible distress. It has the backing of Mrs Johnston's family.

The Lord Advocate has made clear that for exemption from prosecution to be secured, the Court of Session would have to authorise the death of a patient.

Yesterday, Mrs Johnston's case was adjourned for the last time. A final decision on whether doctors can terminate treatment will be made by Lord Cameron of Lochroom later this month.

The chief executive of Law Hospital NHS Trust, Ken Thomson, who was in court to hear the Lord Advocate's statement, said afterwards that he was very much welcomed it.

Mrs Johnston's husband Peter welcomed the court ruling on immunity from prosecution. He said yesterday: "The staff at Law Hospital have done a lot for Janet. I don't want them to get into trouble if they stop feeding her."

"I just want my wife to die in peace and with dignity. Thank God Janet will soon be at rest."

Prisoners volunteer for experiment

Vitamins may wean young offenders from diet of crime

By Richard Ford
HOME CORRESPONDENT

YOUNG offenders are to be given vitamin pills in a pilot project aimed at changing their anti-social behaviour. More than a hundred volunteers will take part in a six-month experiment at Aylesbury young-offender institution. It is hoped the project will show that a change of diet can reduce aggression.

The experiment, which begins next month, follows research in the United States that suggested links between offenders' behaviour and deficiencies in vitamins and minerals. Volunteers will be given supplements containing zinc, fatty acids and other nutrients for comparison with a similar number of inmates who will take dummy pills. The trial will cost more than £100,000.

Bernard Gesch, who will run the project, said yesterday: "Too many people are like jet fighters — refuelling on the move. They grab what they can and that tends to be snacks. Snack food is notoriously low in nutritional value."

Mr Gesch, a former probation officer who now runs Natural Justice, a charity based in Ulverston, Cumbria, said: "If we can improve a

person's health by nutritional supplements this will give us a much better chance at rehabilitating the offender."

By the end of the trial Mr Gesch expects to be able to compare the disciplinary records of the two groups, their wellbeing and their mental state. The project is being funded by a number of charities and is the first of its kind to be conducted in a British jail. A number of studies in the United States have indicated that prisoners suffered from serious deficiencies in vitamins C and B1 and zinc.

Some studies have suggested that a lack of zinc could be linked with impaired control and depression. Derek Bryce-Smith, emeritus professor of chemistry at Reading University, said that work done with juveniles in Cumbria had found zinc deficiencies.

Mr Bryce-Smith said: "Many were depressed and tried to deal with that by seeking excitement, often through crime. Zinc supplements helped them feel better and prevented them doing that."

He stressed, however, that supplements were not a panacea for criminal behaviour. "I am not saying that the whole problem of crime can be resolved by one little zinc pill

each day but a range of vitamins and minerals, including zinc, could change behaviour for the better."

There has been very little research in Britain on links between diet and behaviour, although a number of people in the criminal justice system believe changes in diet can lead to changes in mental state, particularly among hyper-active children.

Historically, diet has been used as an instrument of control in the prison system. In Victorian times diets were linked to a prisoner's behaviour and how much of their sentence had been served.

The pilot project was given a cautious welcome by a leading penal reform group yesterday. Stephen Shaw of the Prison Reform Trust said: "Some research has been done in the United States which maintains there is a link between fast foods and criminal behaviour. I think this could be a useful addition to our knowledge."

Dr Thomas Stuttaford, who writes for *The Times*, said a zinc deficiency could lead to a lack of self-control. "There is slim evidence that nutritional deficiencies can be related to bad behaviour in children but the evidence is pretty scant," he said.

Comedian continues to smile through ten years of pain

LEE HURST, the comedian who co-stars in the BBC quiz *They Think It's All Over*, has disclosed that for ten years he has suffered from ankylosing spondylitis.

This inflammatory rheumatic disorder principally affects the joints between the vertebrae of the spine and the joints between the spine and the pelvis. It can also involve the peripheral joints, particularly when the victims are women or children.

Hurst is a typical sufferer from ankylosing spondylitis in that he is male and was between the ages of 20 and 40 when the disease first struck. It attacks 1 per cent of the general population, but 20 per cent of those who have a particular tissue type and carry the histocompatibility antigen HLA-B27. This characteristic can be inherited.

As the arthritis in the spine develops, problems are not caused only by the pain from the inflamed joints but by an increasingly stiff back, which



MEDICAL BRIEFING

Dr Thomas Stuttaford

can become so extreme that the spine becomes fused. The back pain is worst in the mornings. Treatment with anti-inflammatory drugs is intended to stop the pain, but a permanent stoop.

Patients may develop inflammation within the eye, inflammation of the covering of the heart, aortic valvular heart disease and lung complications. Stiffening of the joints of the chest does not by itself usually cause breathlessness but, as breathing is restricted, the lungs often become infected, requiring treatment with antibiotics. Patients who are HLA-B27 positive have another grave

disadvantage. They are liable to develop Reiter's syndrome if they catch non-specific urethritis from a sexual partner, or from some forms of dysentery. Reiter's syndrome also causes severe arthritis and inflammation of the eyes and of the skin of the palms and soles.

Mr Hurst is unmarried and is reported in his interview to have referred to girlfriends. Reiter's is a forceful argument for monogamy. As a colleague used to tell patients who were found to be HLA-B27 positive: "Some men are born to prefer monogamy — others have it thrust upon them. You belong to the latter group."

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Meteorite carried helium stowaways

Crater find suggests building blocks of life came from space

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

CARBON found in a huge crater in Canada made by a meteorite nearly two billion years ago strengthens the idea that the chemicals of life arrived on Earth from outer space. American scientists have found carbon molecules in the crater debris near Sudbury, Ontario, and have shown that they survived the fiery impact of an object the size of Mount Everest hitting the Earth.

The team from the University of Rochester, New York State, and the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in San Diego, California, report in *Science* magazine that the carbon was in the form of "buckyballs", also known as fullerenes — football-shaped molecules made up of 60 carbon atoms — and that trapped within them were atoms of helium. The helium

stowaways were a mixture of isotopes — different forms of the element — in a ratio that is not found on Earth, but is found in meteorites. This is strong evidence that the helium and the carbon in which it was encased originated outside the solar system.

The team measured the ratio of two helium isotopes, helium-3 and helium-4, and found that it was ten times higher than the ratio found in helium from the Earth's mantle. "The ratio of the helium inside the buckyballs is what we typically find in meteorites," says Professor Robert Fieser of the University of Rochester. "It's much higher than the ratio found anywhere on Earth."

"Our results show clearly that this helium and these buckyballs are of extraterrestrial origin. If a meteorite or a

comet can deliver intact carbon molecules to the Earth's surface, then it's likely that other organic compounds can also survive an impact."

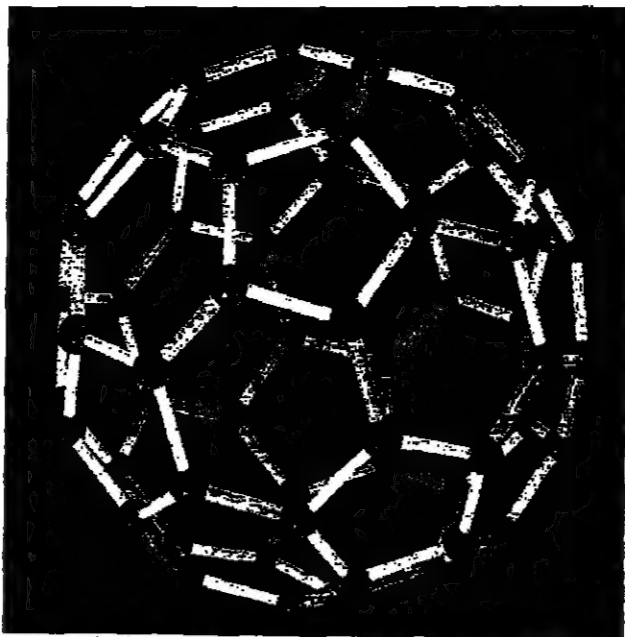
The Scripps scientists were surprised by the findings. "It just didn't make sense to either one of us that fullerenes could survive an impact like this," Dr LuAnn Becker says. The crater covers nearly 700 square miles and the impact would have released a thousand times more energy than detonating every nuclear weapon on Earth.

If carbon did survive the impact, it fills a gap in the evolution of life on Earth. Two billion years ago there were no higher-level plants and no concentrated sources of carbon on Earth, yet all modern life forms are based on the chemistry of carbon. Where did it all come from? The new

evidence backs the idea that it came from outer space, after being created in cool stars known as red giants.

"I have to admit that I was a very strong opponent of this view," says Dr Jeffrey Bada of Scripps, one of the authors. "I didn't think it would be a viable way to get organics on the Earth because I believed, as most people did, that these events were just too energetic for the stuff to survive. Now, all of a sudden, I have a different view."

The buckyballs were found in the Sudbury crater two



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The buckyballs were found in the Sudbury crater two

years ago, but at the time Dr Bada believed them to have been formed in the impact. He has changed his mind because of studies of the helium inside them, using a mass spectrometer.

Buckyballs are exotic molecules of carbon, first identified in 1985 by a team that included Professor Harold Kroto of Sussex University.

They were named Buckminsterfullerene because their structure resembles that of the geodesic domes designed by the late American engineer Buckminster Fuller.

Gene discovery provides clue to causes of ageing

By Nigel Hawkes

THE first human gene known to affect the ageing process has been identified by American scientists.

The gene has been isolated in people suffering from a rare genetic disease called Werner's syndrome. Normal as children, sufferers begin to age rapidly in adolescence. They stop growing, their hair goes grey and they suffer several of the degenerative diseases of age, including blocked arteries, diabetes and bone thinning.

The discovery of the gene is an important finding because the changes are so like those of ordinary ageing. A team from Seattle Veterans Affairs Health Care System and Darwin Molecular Corporation, a biotechnology company in Seattle, reports the results in *Science*.

The gene identified is one that carries the genetic code for an enzyme called a helicase, whose job it is to unwind the two strands of the DNA double helix by

breaking the hydrogen bonds that hold them together. This means that the helicase is involved in many operations, including DNA replication and repair.

Failure of the DNA in cells to copy itself with perfect accuracy, and the consequent slow accumulation of errors, is one of the possible causes of ageing. "We are very excited about the discovery, and that the function of the gene product is apparently so clear," Dr David Galas, executive vice-president of Darwin, said.

"There is still a great deal to be learnt about the precise processes involved in the cell, but our work has now opened a new window into the biology of age-related diseases," he said.

The scientific team, led by Dr Gerard Schellenberg, concludes that the finding is evidence that "at least some components of normal ageing and disease susceptibility in later life may be related to aberrations in DNA metabolism".



Eva Herzogova

Bra team gives flask a big lift

The Thermos flask is being given a racy new image by the man who thought up the Wonderbra adverts, featuring Eva Herzogova. The £500,000 advertising campaign by Trevor Beattie and his agency TBWA, to be launched this week, includes slogans such as "Leave it, Grandad."

Set piece

One of the first British-made television sets, a 1938 HMV model 904, fetched £2,700 at Christie's in London. It has a walnut cabinet, built-in wireless and 4in by 4in round screen — but no longer works with modern power systems or broadcasts.

Tranquil travel

Mobile telephones and personal stereos have been banned from certain carriages on Great Western trains between Paddington and South Wales. Passengers have also been asked to speak quietly. A spokesman said: "People seem to like the peace and quiet."

Research prize

Dr Paul Nurse, director of laboratory research at the Imperial Cancer Research Fund in London, has won the Dr H.P. Heinen Prize for biochemistry and biophysics, awarded by the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Fire kills boy

A four-year-old boy died after fire broke out in his bedroom. Jason Ditch was rescued from the burning room at his home in Colchester, Essex, by firefighters, but died at the scene. His mother, Caroline, and brothers Jake, 6, and Jordan, 2, escaped unhurt.

Mane road ahead

The first pelican crossing for horses, costing £20,000 and with traffic controls at saddle height, is being built on the A505 bypass in Nottinghamshire. The new relief road, which crosses a bridge path, also includes six underground tunnels for toads.

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Higher taxes and Labour go together like strawberries and cream, says Major

Irritated Tories try to rain on Blair's American parade

By Philip Webster in London and Peter Riddell in New York

JOHN MAJOR tried to dent the impact of Tony Blair's American visit yesterday by declaring that Labour was forever linked to higher taxes. With the Labour leader trumpeting the message from New York to Washington that he has buried that image for good, the Prime Minister said the party and higher taxes went together "like strawberries and cream".

Speaking on a constituency visit in Cambridgeshire, Mr Major voiced deep scepticism over Mr Blair's attempt, in talks with financiers and a speech to businessmen, to reassure middle-class professionals that Labour would not penalise them.

The Prime Minister said: "What he really plans, heaven alone knows. All I can say is every experience we have had from any Labour Government is that taxes go up. What we have seen from local authorities run by the Labour Party across the country is council

taxes going up. Labour and higher taxes go together like strawberries and cream.

"The reality is the Labour Party always wants to spend more money and you can't spend more money unless you're going to put up taxes. Now, if he will tell us why he's suddenly in favour of low taxes, perhaps he can explain why he hasn't supported our tax-cutting over the years, even in the last budget.

"I don't think he can explain that. This seems to me to be another indication that the Labour Party will say almost anything if they think it will win them some temporary support. But I don't believe he is in favour of tax-cutting. I don't believe he could deliver tax-cutting. It is against the instinct of the Labour Party."

Mr Major's remarks reflected the irritation among ministers at the wide media coverage Mr Blair won for his visit. Labour officials were dismissive of the Prime Minister's comments, which a senior adviser to Mr Blair described as "more evidence of the Government behaving like an opposition".

In his speech to businessmen yesterday, Mr Blair argued that Labour did not have to regard high tax as "a virility symbol or as a badge of political pride". He stressed the increase in tax faced by ordinary people under the Conservatives and said that Labour's top priority should be "to lower taxes at the bottom end and reduce the appallingly high marginal rates of tax millions of working people pay".

The Labour leader said that this "should not be seen as a desire to punish those at the top". Many people with "modest income", such as some policemen, schoolteachers and middle-managers, were currently paying the higher rate of tax, he said.

Mr Blair did not make any precise commitments, but claimed: "New Labour needs no persuasion of the need to encourage entrepreneurs, innovators and wealth creators. I want a system where people can become wealthy through hard work and merit, not rely on inheritance or a better class of accountants."

Mr Major was asked if Mr Blair was stealing his thunder. He replied: "It sounds to me as though he realises that what the Conservative Party stands for is what the people of this country stand for, but that isn't what the Labour Party stands for and it isn't what the Labour Party can deliver."

"Tories believe in low taxes. If we put taxes up it's because we've no choice. The gut instinct of the Labour Party is to spend more and put taxes up. He said last year that you can only tell what a party's like when it's in power. Labour is in power in local government right across the country. Council tax has gone up dramatically."

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Tony Blair in talks with the multi-millionaire financier George Soros, regarded as a connoisseur of power

Bankers and brokers pay homage to a Prime Minister in waiting

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

WHEN an American pension-fund manager asked about the reference to enterprise in the new Clause Four of Labour's constitution, Tony Blair knew his party was being taken seriously again. For the first time in nearly two decades, a Labour leader visiting America is being treated as a potential Prime Minister.

The most striking feature of the Blair visit is how he, and his views, are being probed as if he might soon be in office. It started on the plane on Wednesday, when he was questioned by passengers and by the cabin crew who claimed they were thinking of voting Labour. In New York, he has been given the official mark of leadership status by those two connoisseurs of power, Henry Kissinger and George Soros, as well as being feted by the media and by the Democrat Party elite.

Typical was a round-table discussion with 28 bankers, brokers and fund-managers. The initial atmosphere was said to be tense, as if Mr Blair

was making a presentation on behalf of "New Labour plc" to sceptical institutional investors. There was apparently a touch of the "third degree". The audience was already well-informed about Labour — partly thanks to a recent visit by Gordon Brown — and asked about policies on inflation, a single currency and the Bank of England. This interest was not because those present are pro-Labour — such investors are not enthusiastic about any politicians — but rather because they want to know about who is, or is likely to be, in power.

This interest has encouraged Mr Blair to clarify his message. It is partly reassurance — that Labour would be a safe bet for inward investment, would not penalise wealth creators, and would keep the current framework of trade union laws. There is plenty for the Tories to argue about in Labour's commit-

ment to the social chapter of the Maastricht treaty and to the minimum wage. But Mr Blair has established in the public and business mind that Labour has changed substantially — not least by transforming its structure to bypass its more ideological activists, "freeing it from the excessive influence of pressure and interest groups," as he put it yesterday.

But what Mr Blair has only really begun recently to do is to show how Labour's policies would differ from the Tories. This is less to do with detailed policies than with broad strategic direction.

In his speech yesterday Mr Blair took that forward. It was not just his claim that Labour is a party of the Centre as well as the Centre-Left. It was more his attempt to argue that the Thatcherite agenda of opening up markets and encouraging enterprise should not be reversed but, that gov-

ernment now faced new problems and priorities in equipping people and business to succeed in a more competitive world.

The key theme, stressed more clearly yesterday than before, is that Mr Blair sees an active role for government in handling such change in an era of economic insecurity. This involves policies for government to work in partnership with business and measures to improve education and skills and to reform the welfare state.

This can be seen as common ground between the main parties. After all, while David Blunkett and Gillian Shephard argue about selection, they have similar approaches to improving standards in schools. But there are key differences over the extent of regulation and the balance between the government and free markets. Mr Blair has staked his ground: now he will have to justify his view that governments really can make a difference.

The man on almost everyone's guest list

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

BY THE time Tony Blair flies home from Washington tonight there will be scarcely a senior member of the Clinton Administration nor a leading American opinion-former that he has not met.

The only major players the Labour leader will not encounter during his 24 hours in the American capital are Bob Dole, Newt Gingrich and the other Republican masters of Congress who are conveniently out of town.

Mr Blair will be received by President Clinton, Al Gore, the Vice-President, and Warren Christopher, the Secretary of State, at the White House this morning and was scheduled to meet Hillary Clinton at a private cocktail

party last night. He also had a meeting late yesterday with Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board.

Sir John Kerr, the British Ambassador, was last night hosting a dinner for Mr Blair at which the guests were to include the Gulf War commander Colin Powell.

Whether Mr Blair's visit generates extensive coverage in the US media remains to be seen. He was interviewed on ABC's *Good Morning America* yesterday, and will be seen at this morning on the Fox network's breakfast show. This afternoon he is to appear on CNN but neither CBS nor NBC, the two other big networks, requested interviews.

Wowing Wall St. page 21

Greens in attempt to recapture lost glory

By Andrew Pierce

THE Green Party, which once seemed poised to break into mainstream politics in Britain, launched its local government election campaign yesterday in an attempt to regain the national spotlight.

Party activists, outnumbering a solitary reporter and camera crew by four to one, had seemed hopeful when queues of people formed at Conway Hall, London, the venue for a press conference. Their optimism quickly vanished when they realised that the crowds were waiting to audition next door for a university student production of *The Deep Blue Sea*.

The Greens' membership has fallen to 4,600 from a peak of 20,000 in 1989, the year they polled 2.5 million votes, 15 per cent of the total cast, in the European elections. It was the year they promised to transform the political landscape.

But since 1991 their opinion poll rating, according to MORI, has been stuck firmly on 1 per cent. They attracted only 1.6 per cent of the vote at the last general election and 3.5 per cent in the 1994 European elections.

The party boasts of having more than 100 councillors, but closer analysis shows that only 19 are at district level; the rest are parish councillors. It is fielding 288 candidates in next month's local elections compared with almost 700 last year, although fewer seats are being fought.

However, optimism ruled supreme at the yesterday's launch. Members were flying flags from the Taiwan Green Party, which they helped to launch in January, and which has already succeeded in having its first MP elected. They promised to continue to be visible in bypass protests. They are planning an assault on the Metropolitan boroughs of Leeds and Kirklees and have high hopes of two gains.

David Taylor, the party's principal spokesman, said they were involved in real issues, not fluffy ones. "We have been going for 23 years. We are the oldest Green Party in Europe. We are not given proper credit and do not have any national representation because of the inequities of the voting system."

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customers. RNIB also encourages the stores to provide staff to read out prices and give directions. RNIB's work is especially important if you consider many visually impaired people live alone. For more details about RNIB call 0345 023040.



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Ruling party emerges with election lead

North Korean threats backfire in Seoul poll

FROM AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE IN SEOUL

WITH more than three fifths of the vote counted, the ruling New Korea Party (NKP) held a clear lead in South Korea's parliamentary elections which dealt a humiliating blow to Kim Dae Jung, the opposition leader.

A record low 63.9 per cent of the electorate took part in yesterday's poll, which was contested against a backdrop of increasing tension with North Korea. Many people chose to get away for the national holiday instead of voting, although there were street battles in Seoul between anti-government students and the police.

Last night, the NKP led in 123 electoral districts, followed by Kim Dae Jung's National Congress for New Politics (NCNP) in 66. The conservative United Liberal Democrats (ULD) led in 39 districts, the Democratic Party in nine districts and independents in 16. There were 294 seats at stake.

including 46 decided on a proportional basis.

Chang Dae-ro, an NKP spokesman, said that President Kim Young Sam would have no difficulty maintaining his mandate for the remainder of his term. "We will be able to hold onto our parliamentary majority by fielding sympathetic independents," he said.

Mr Chang predicted that the NKP would secure 138 seats, including their proportional seats, 12 fewer than the 150 needed for an absolute majority.

Earlier predictions by three television networks based on a mixture of exit polls and telephone surveys turned out to have greatly exaggerated gains by the NKP.

Kim Dae Jung, 72, who marched back on to the political scene last year after big opposition gains in local elections in June, suffered a serious setback. He had said that he would run for the presiden-

cy next year only if yesterday's polls showed the people to be behind him.

Ruling party officials and analysts attributed the strong showing for the NKP to recent North Korean forays into the border area, which boosted the NKP's chances by persuading people to support the Government at time of threat.

"I think Kim Jong Il [the North Korean leader] helped the NKP a lot," Lee Ho Jae, a political science professor at Korea University, said.

The election outcome echoed what happened in the presidential election in Taiwan last month, when President Lee Teng-hui was victorious after China attempted to intimidate Taiwanese voters by conducting missile tests in the Taiwan Strait. North Korea sent troops into the Demilitarized Zone dividing the two Koreas in three consecutive forays over the weekend in violation

of the 1953 armistice agreement.

About 1,000 extreme-left-wing students fought the police near Sungkyunkwan University in Seoul, hurling firebombs to counter volleys of teargas in a protest against the elections. "Overthrow Kim Young Sam and conservative politicians," the students shouted as they threw hundreds of firebombs at the riot police. Several police officers were engulfed in flames, but there were no serious casualties, witnesses said.

The strong showing for the conservative ULD, headed by Kim Jong Pil, the former Korean Central Intelligence Agency chief, was boosted by areas loyal to Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae Woo, the jailed former Presidents. They are on trial charged with corruption and with leading a military rebellion that brought Mr Chun to power in 1980.



President Kim Young Sam prepares to vote in yesterday's general election

WORLD SUMMARY

UN attack on French 'racism'

Geneva: A United Nations special investigator rejected French claims to be a haven for human rights yesterday when he gave a severe account of racism and xenophobia sweeping the country, in part with official blessing (Peter Capella writes).

In a report on his mission last October, Maurice Glele-Ahanhanzo, the special investigator, said xenophobia had been fuelled by the public statements of French politicians as well as by tough nationality and immigration laws passed in 1993.

FBI warning on Unabomber mail

New York: Timber executives in northwestern America have been told by federal investigators to check their post in case the Unabomber suspect, Theodore Kaczynski, mailed a bomb before his arrest last week (Quentin Letis writes). FBI sources said a device found at Mr Kaczynski's Montana cabin bore an address and, like the deadly parcels sent by the Unabomber, also had a false sender's name and address.

Harare looking for a hangman

Harare: The Zimbabwe Government, which has more than 100 prisoners under sentence of death, is making secret approaches to prison staff to find a hangman (Jan Raath writes). The last incumbent, who was never named, died last month, taking the secrets of his trade to the grave. "He did not want to teach anyone else the job," a spokesman said.

America expels Sudan envoy

New York: Ahmed Yousif Muhammad, second secretary at Sudan's United Nations mission, was expelled from the US as part of Washington's campaign to isolate Sudan's Islamic regime (James Bone writes). He was implicated in plots to blow up the UN building in 1993 and to kill President Mubarak of Egypt.

Africans sign nuclear treaty

Cairo: Forty-three African states signed a treaty declaring Africa free of nuclear weapons. President Mubarak of Egypt told the signing ceremony the Africans had set an example which the Middle East and rest of the world should follow. (Reuters)

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Organised crime's profits at \$1,000bn

FROM REUTERS IN MANILA

ORGANISED crime gangs make \$1,000 billion (£660 billion) a year in profits and are so powerful economically that they pose a threat to developing countries and emerging democracies, a United Nations official said yesterday.

The profits include \$1 billion laundered through global financial markets every day, Eduardo Vetter, head of the Vienna-based UN Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division, told a conference in Manila.

He said that the estimated total of criminal profits almost equalled the annual budget of the United States. "Free trade and high-speed telecommunications make it easier to engage in multiple activities and launder money across national borders, with an estimated \$1 billion in crime profits wire-transferred through the world financial markets every day."

He added: "It has become clear that only by tackling organised crime in a concerted manner can we hope to make inroads into a problem that transcends borders and the capacity of national mechanisms alone."

Right now, Children are dying in Liberia

The fighting in Liberia has escalated dramatically. Children have been forced to flee their homes and villages, dodging bullets and mortar fire. *There is no embassy for them to run to.* Many children have received horrific injuries and lost one or both parents. *Thousands of children face possible death.*

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Foreigners evacuated amid Monrovia bloodshed

Briton condemns UN over escape ordeal in Liberia

By LEVIA LINTON

ONE of the first Britons evacuated from Monrovia, the Liberian capital, condemned the United Nations yesterday for refusing to help her when her life was in danger.

Wendy White, 38, from Staplehurst, Kent, said that, to the sound of gunfire, she and her colleagues had made a terrifying six-mile journey through the city only for officials at the UN's Riverview compound to refuse them admission for four hours. UN officials also tried to stop her and her friends from boarding one of two helicopters leaving the compound.

The officials told her and her companions that they were not a priority and that the helicopters were not intended to help with evacuation. But the German pilots refused to leave without passengers and Ms White and other Britons were eventually given seats after UN personnel were ordered not to leave.

In the confusion one Briton, Ian Christmas, 41, from Doncaster, was left behind and is believed now to be without adequate supplies of food and water. "Our fear now is that he and the others could be taken hostage," said Ms White, who returned to Britain yesterday.

She and her friends had sheltered in the house of a World Food Programme official in Monrovia for three days. "He was very good, but most of them kept themselves to themselves, to the point where we felt they were keep-

ing supplies to themselves," she said.

By last Monday Ms White said the rebels had looted the Mobil compound next door. "We knew we were next, and we were constantly under fear of attack. Towards the end food was running out."

Ms White, Andrew Dunham, her partner, and fellow Briton David Wood-Roberts finally boarded one of the helicopters at dusk on Monday. When they arrived in Freetown after a two-hour

Nothing had prepared me for Monrovia; it is a hell hole. Every single building was a shell

flight, Ms White said she kissed the tarmac. "I really thought I was going to die," she added.

Ms White's ordeal began when she was woken by shots and grenade explosions at 3.30am last Saturday as rebels surrounded General Roosevelt Johnson's house just two blocks from the hotel where she was staying. At 8am a rocket-propelled grenade hit the top floor while she was at reception. "The door was open and there was a big gust of wind. My legs turned to jelly

and I felt queasy. I started thinking of home," she said.

For the next 30 minutes she and Mr Dunham waited anxiously as rebels surrounded the hotel. "All we could hear was gunfire. We felt like sitting ducks." Half an hour later, soldiers from the West African peacekeeping force came to the hotel with two tanks to evacuate the guests. As one of the soldiers led them out to the convoy of cars, he was shot at.

She is glad to have escaped, but she had harsh words for the UN. "We have been appalled by the UN presence. They have so many staff and what are they doing?"

Now she is worried about her countrymen still in Liberia. "There are a hell of a lot of Britons still out there. We are desperate for them, we are very worried — I am a wife and two children," she said.

Ms White who, with Mr Dunham, a pilot, had gone to Liberia to set up a Liberian registered airline, added: "Nothing prepared me for Monrovia. It is a hell hole. Every single building was a shell, with toddlers playing on the fifteenth floor of windowless buildings."

She added that it was extremely difficult to do business in the country. "Every time you wanted to do something you had to give backhanders." She added that her and Mr Dunham's company, Liberty Air, had just managed to land a few contracts when the fighting broke out.

Troops of peace force join in looting

By JAMES BONE AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

WEST African peacekeepers joined in "very heavy, very systematic" looting as fighting continued yesterday in Monrovia, the Liberian capital, United Nations officials said.

Sylvana Foa, for the UN, said reports from the UN mission spoke of a "frenzy of looting" and that it appeared leaders of the warring factions had lost control of their fighters.

UN sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said it appeared some West African peacekeepers, particularly Nigerians, had joined in the looting. The peacekeeping force, consisting of soldiers from the 16-nation Economic Community of West African States, was sent to Liberia in 1990 and is known as Ecomog.

UN military observers were forced to take refuge in the US Embassy compound during the looting. A UN scout team which toured the city found "systematic looting everywhere", but UN headquarters lost contact with its offices in Mamba Point, two miles from the city centre, where "UN Row" and the US Embassy are located. The 73 UN military observers in Monrovia fled their headquarters in Mamba Point when the gates were broken down by looters.

The UN Children's Fund and UN Development Programme offices were also reported to have been plundered, and 12 UN staff are said to have sought shelter at the US Embassy. The offices of the World Health Organisation were looted earlier in the week.



Starr signs: Starr Lammon, of Napa, California, cradling her youngest daughter Nicolette, who was born on Monday — exactly the same date as her mother and two sisters Jeirlynn, 12, left, and Ashley, aged 2

Fifteen die in German airport fire

By OUR FOREIGN STAFF

AT LEAST 15 people were reported killed and more than 100 injured when a fire broke out in a flower shop at Düsseldorf International airport yesterday.

Many of the casualties were overcome by thick smoke through which firefighters had to search for the victims before the blaze was brought under control, witnesses said. Police said many of the deaths appeared to have been caused by inhaling poisonous gas. The dead were found in the shop and a lift, said police, who added that the death

count could rise because of the seriousness of some of the injuries.

A policeman and a child were among nine of the dead who were found in the lift system. Tents were set up to treat the casualties.

The fire spread rapidly through Terminal A, which primarily serves Lufthansa, police said. A fire service spokesman said that the cause of the fire was not yet known, but the shop where the fire started was undergoing repairs. All firefighting units in Düsseldorf were deployed to

put out the blaze, while fire engines and teams poured in to help from the surrounding area.

Panic broke out in the arrivals hall when the fire erupted. Officials evacuated the terminal and closed the airport to all air traffic, police said.

ZDF television showed pictures of a deserted, smoky terminal after the fire and a body covered with a white sheet on a stretcher on the street outside.

"My co-worker saw sparks flying out of a ventilation grille

over this flower store, and he immediately called the fire brigade," an unidentified young man told the television station.

Uninjured travelers were transported to hotels or to the Konrad Adenauer Airport that services Cologne and Bonn, where planes that had been scheduled to arrive at Düsseldorf were being redirected.

Düsseldorf is Germany's second busiest airport in terms of passengers after Frankfurt.

Leaders lose control of gunmen in capital

FROM BUDU KAISA IN MONROVIA

A WOMAN who had not eaten since she gave birth several days before lay groaning on the concrete floor of the casualty clinic, next to two young men shot in the back by the gunmen who have turned Monrovia into a city of bloodlust and anarchy.

"We are trying to manage but there is nothing to do to save their lives," said the French doctor with Médecins Sans Frontières, one of a team of seven who have refused the chance of a flight to safety on American helicopters.

The exhausted doctor said that many people all over the city were wounded,

but could not reach hospitals and clinics because of the fighting, which was also preventing drugs and dressings reaching treatment centres.

While a handful of expatriates remain to help Liberians, the gunmen seem bent on tribal massacre, and indiscriminate killing. Yesterday fighters fired a rocket into the Greystone compound, an American-owned site where 15,000 civilians were sheltering. The rocket killed two boys and wounded several others.

Lawlessness has overtaken Monrovia since Charles Taylor and Al Hajj Kromoh, members of a nascent coalition Government, accused Roosevelt Johnson, their Krahn tribal rival, of murder and unleashed a bloody campaign to

arrest him last week. His fighters returned in kind.

Paul Koulen, the deputy representative of the United Nations Development Programme, said: "The conflict is out of control. Charles Taylor and Al Hajj Kromoh made a monstrous miscalculation. They have forced a re-alliance of forces along tribal lines. None of them has control or can restore public order. It is anarchy." Moments earlier his offices were raided and cars looted by teenagers armed with AK47 rifles.

I have been in Liberia throughout the civil war, which broke out in 1989. In the worst days of 1990 and 1992 the warlords had some kind of control over their men, but even this has vanished.

Tyson in training with Islam to beat temptation

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK



Lafferty takes \$2.9m in settlement of estate

What the butler got

NEW YORK: A long-running dispute over the will of the tobacco heiress Doris Duke has ended with her bibulous butler accepting a lump sum of \$4.5 million (£2.9 million) (Quentin Letts writes).

In return, Bernard Lafferty, who is barely able to read and has admitted to being an alcoholic, has agreed to resign as a co-executor of the estate. Towards the end of Miss Duke's life she fell increasingly under the spell of the ponytailed Mr Lafferty.

The agreement clears the way for the remainder of the fortune, bar the fees of advisers, trustees and attendants, to be distributed to the charities named by Miss Duke.

MIKE TYSON, the heavy-weight boxing champion, remained silent yesterday about a woman's allegation that he assaulted her in a Chicago nightclub.

His Islamic spiritual adviser, however, said that "Iron Mike" was prayerful and that although he recently mastered the five daily supplications a devout Muslim must recite, he faced a "never-ending struggle" with temptation.

Police said they were taking "appropriate action" regarding the complaint of a 25-year-old woman that Mr Tyson bit her face after they kissed in a discotheque early on Monday morning. The unnamed woman's lawyer, Jerry Lee Peeter, said that there were two witnesses. She claimed that Mr Tyson summoned her after seeing her on the dance floor.

The boxer himself remained behind the closed door of his large house in Southington, Ohio, but friends disputed the suggestion that Mr Tyson was with the woman in a roped-off part of the slick Clique club. A member of the club management claimed that throughout

his visit Mr Tyson discussed setting up a series of youth centres in Chicago — a perhaps implausible claim given the late hour. The assault, termed "sexual battery" in the police complaint, allegedly occurred at 1.30am in a private room towards the back of the club, a fashionable establishment where ordinary clubgoers can expect to mingle with the celebrities who have made it one of their haunts.

Muhammad Siddiq, a spiritual adviser who has taught Mr Tyson the tenets of his new-found faith, said that his pupil was learning a routine of prayer, charity and fasting, trying to recognise the goodness of all human beings and trying to avoid those kind of things that keep us going in the right direction.

Clique that night was no place for avoiding temptation. The women were beautiful and the music was loud. Mr Tyson, who remains on parole after his 1992 rape conviction, had gone to Chicago ostensibly to worship at a mosque, but when he was through with his prayers he made for one of the best known honeypots in town. Mr Tyson was drinking nothing stronger than cranberry juice, said his lieutenants, but George Walker, chief probation officer for Marion County's Superior Court criminal division, said: "Bars are not the best place for parolees."

Tyson friends, however, suggested that the woman was simply trying her luck. An acquaintance of the complainant came to Mr Tyson's defence. Tammie Battle, a beauty parlour assistant, said: "She [the alleged victim] kept asking the person who took her coat if she could meet Mike Tyson."

Miss Battle said that she could detect no bite marks on the woman's face when they left Clique together.

Marital slip-up for ice skater

By QUENTIN LETTS

TONYA HARDING, the bad girl of ice skating, has sued for divorce after less than four months of marriage. When it comes to triple salcos, Miss Harding is mustard, but in her private life she has repeatedly fallen flat on her rump.

The divorce action was started this week in Oregon after Miss Harding experienced "irreconcilable differences" with her second husband, Michael Smith. She wished him happiness and success in his career (he is a machinist) and hoped the good wishes were reciprocated (unlike), it seems a different world from December 23, the day of their white wedding on board a yacht.

The wedding was sealed from the press because the couple hoped to sell exclusive photographs of the event to a tabloid newspaper. Fisticuffs, a car chase and screamed insults followed when it was discovered that one of the wedding guests had sold snapshots of the bride and groom to an Oregon publication.

In January 1994 Jeff Gillooly, Miss Harding's first husband, plotted to inflict a knee injury on Miss Harding's then Olympic ice-skating rival, Nancy Kerrigan. Miss Harding pleaded guilty to conspiracy charges and paid \$160,000 (£106,000) in fines and costs.

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Gibraltar tension rises after drug chase death

By DOMINIQUE SEARLE IN GIBRALTAR AND EDWARD OWEN

A DRAMATIC helicopter pursuit of a drug-running power boat racing for the Spanish coast ended yesterday when the helicopter crashed, killing a Civil Guard.

The smugglers apparently threw an oar into the aircraft's tail rotor.

The incident has caused a new diplomatic tug-of-war over the disputed territory between Britain and Spain. The boat was registered to a Briton and the involvement of a Gibraltar has renewed Spanish anger over the use of Gibraltar for the illicit import of tobacco and drugs into Spain, often from North Africa.

Spain immediately imposed tough new border controls on routes between Spain and Gibraltar, causing delays of up to three hours for cars and increasing the transit time for pedestrians from a few minutes to half an hour.

César Braña, the Civil Governor of Cádiz, announced the imposition of "severe and strict" controls after the death of José Muntildaoz Hidalgo, a Civil Guard aircraft mechanic.

The helicopter pilot and his communications officer were uninjured in the crash after three men in the Gibraltar-registered rigid inflatable boat

had allegedly dumped some 1,300lb of cannabis on a beach at Barbate de Franco, near Cape Trafalgar.

Yesterday David Brighty, the British Ambassador to Madrid, was summoned by the Spanish Foreign Ministry to hear José Rodríguez Spilioti, Madrid's head of European diplomacy, express Spain's "profound irritation" at the incident and complain that Britain had failed to introduce effective measures on the Rock to combat illicit activities.

A Spaniard escaped from the scene but two other men, a Moroccan and a Gibraltarian, were arrested.

Señor Braña said yesterday that a broken oar was found in the smugglers' boat, indicating that it may have been thrown into the helicopter's machinery. Eye-witnesses spoke on Spanish television of the aircraft's runner hitting the water and knocking it out of control.

In Gibraltar on Wednesday, Paul Alan Tremayne, a Briton who is registered as owner of the vessel, was detained on suspicion of wasting police time after he reported the boat stolen. Royal Gibraltar police have indicated that his report came after news of the incident had broken on radio. Rigid



A powerful rigid inflatable boat, of the sort used by smugglers between North Africa and Spain via Gibraltar, speeds towards the Rock

inflatable boats are used by smugglers because of their long range. They often move across the strait at high speed at night without lights.

In an almost daily duel, Spanish Civil Guard helicopters and launches try to catch the smugglers who race across to Spain with cheap tobacco from the Rock as well as hashish brought from Morocco. Recently Britain had

agreed to ban the use of some 200 high-powered speedboats, with names such as *Midnight Express*, that were moored in Gibraltar's marinas. Their crews would cross the few hundred yards to Spain when the all-clear, or the presence of a bribed Spanish official, was signalled by mobile telephones.

Last July the Gibraltar authorities seized all 64 rigid

inflatable boats based on the Rock. Strict quotas and controls on cheap American tobacco were later introduced, resulting in an end to the widespread tobacco smuggling. Spain partly relaxed controls at the frontier last autumn in response to the move and Gibraltar authorities demanded detailed paperwork and requirements from the boat owners. As a result,

only 12 vessels were returned in rules aimed at avoiding owners obtaining court orders which on previous occasions have succeeded in defeating legislation. However, it is known that some smugglers had moved their bases to Ceuta, the Spanish North African enclave, and some Spanish coastal villages.

Leading article, page 17



London pledges action to halt the smugglers' speedboats

By MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

BRITAIN last night expressed "deep regret" at the death of the Spanish Civil Guard killed while pursuing drug smugglers near Gibraltar, and insisted that it was committed to stamping out smuggling on the Rock.

The Foreign Office said it would co-operate in the investigation, and announced an immediate check on the speedboats licensed in Gibraltar. However, a spokesman said that since July there had been tighter control on the licensing of

fast inflatable boats, and the Gibraltar Government had reduced their number from 65 to 11.

The Foreign Office, while not rejecting Spain's protest to David Brighty, the British Ambassador, suggested that this did not take account of the co-operation between Britain and Spain to curb smuggling into southern Spain. It noted that the 30-minute meeting had been "businesslike" — diplomatic language for sharp and cool — and said the ambassador had reiterated Britain's commitment to last year's measures to tighten law and order in Gibraltar. The Government is

embarrassed that the incident has revived Spanish protests over Gibraltar at a time when it hoped that Gibraltar's new laws on drug smuggling and money laundering, enacted last July, would reduce tensions with Madrid over the Rock.

Earlier, Britain's troubled relations with Gibraltar led to a confrontation between the Foreign Office and the Government of Joe Bossano, the Chief Minister, that almost culminated 18 months ago in the suspension of the Rock's constitution and the imposition of direct rule.

At issue was the chorus of complaints from Spain and Brussels that Gibraltar was becoming a haven for cigarette smuggling, drug running and money laundering. Madrid accused Mr Bossano of refusing to co-operate in counter-drug smuggling, and imposed draconian border restrictions, with long delays and rigorous customs searches. Britain protested to Madrid. But at the same time the Foreign Office demanded that Gibraltar take swift steps to curb smuggling and comply fully with EU banking directives.

From the summer of 1994 until

December, Douglas Hurd, then Foreign Secretary, had an acrimonious correspondence with Mr Bossano, insisting that he do more to put into effect dozens of EU directives that were being circumvented. Britain offered to send over officials to help draft legislation. It gave Mr Bossano a deadline of January 1995 to comply.

Finally, as relations between Britain, Spain and Gibraltar became ever more tense, Mr Hurd and Javier Solana, then Spanish Foreign Minister, met in London to agree on measures to halt the use of the Rock for smuggling and ensure

that differences on Gibraltar did not derail overall relations between Britain and Spain.

Britain is responsible for Gibraltar's dealings with the EU and its external relations under the 1969 constitution. The British Government, wary of suggestions that it is ready to see an eventual transfer of sovereignty, has refused to discuss Gibraltar's status in the regular meetings with Spain. Under the Treaty of Utrecht, which ceded the Rock to Britain, the territory cannot opt for independence: if Britain relinquishes control, sovereignty returns to Spain.

Riddle of Paris murder house

FROM SUSAN BELL
IN PARIS

THE mysterious and violent deaths of two successful architects and their children is gripping France and puzzling police. The bodies of Piotr Zakrzewski, 48, his wife Marguerite, 46, and their sons, Adam, 16, and Arthur, 12, were found this week in the family home in Sceaux, a wealthy Paris suburb.

Marguerite Zakrzewski was hanging in her nightdress in the stairwell. At her feet lay Arthur, who apparently died from strangulation. A thick rope around his neck was attached to the banister. The knots were described by one investigator as having been "loosened, as if they had been undone after the murder".

Upstairs, Piotr lay on the couple's bed, his throat slit. There were several knife wounds to his body. On the ground floor, Adam lay dead in his bedroom. His throat had also been cut.

The bodies were found on Tuesday afternoon by a friend who attended the nearby Lycée Lakanal, where the brothers were pupils. The boy had invited Adam to the cinema on Sunday but he had refused without giving a reason. When neither brother attended classes after the Easter weekend, the boy visited the Zakrzewski's house. Through the half-open door, he saw Mme Zakrzewski's body.

The police think that either the family were the victims of a murderer, or the husband and two sons were killed by Mme Zakrzewski before she committed suicide.

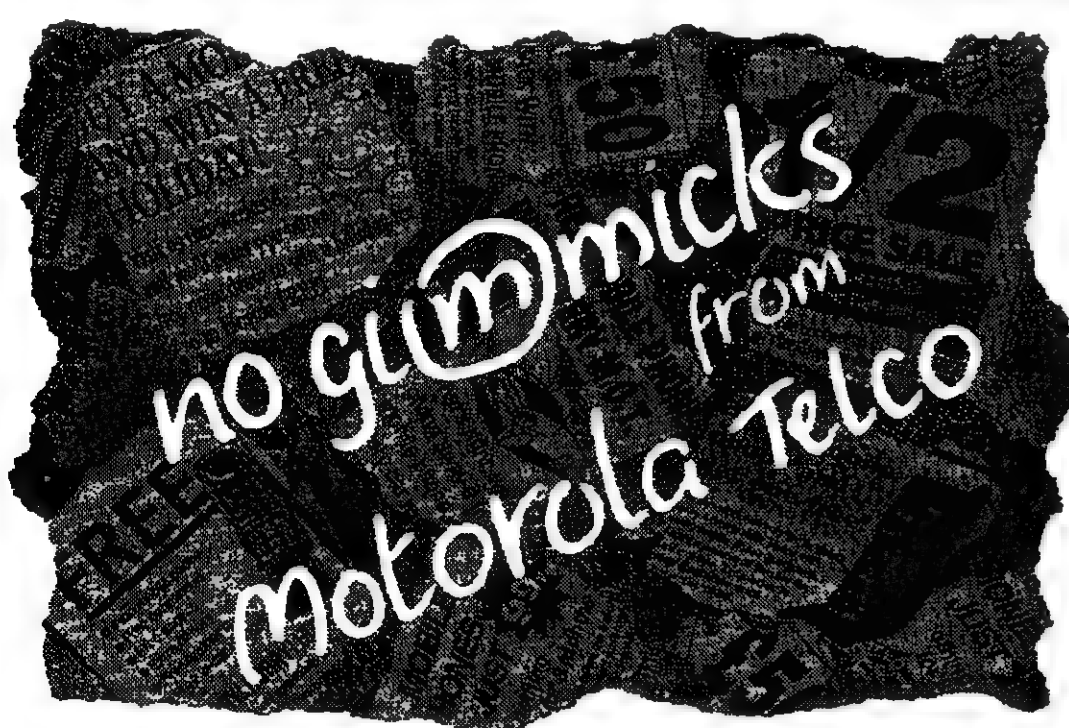
Investigators have ruled out burglary. Everything was clean as if it had been tidied up, the police say.

The police suspect that the father and elder son were killed in their sleep. No trace of blood was found on Mme Zakrzewski's body or clothing. The weapon used to kill Piotr and Adam is missing.

According to a female relation interviewed by the police, the couple did not have any financial or marital problems. They emigrated to France from Poland in the early 1970s, studied architecture at the Ecole des Beaux Arts before founding their award-winning architecture firm, PLL, in 1981.



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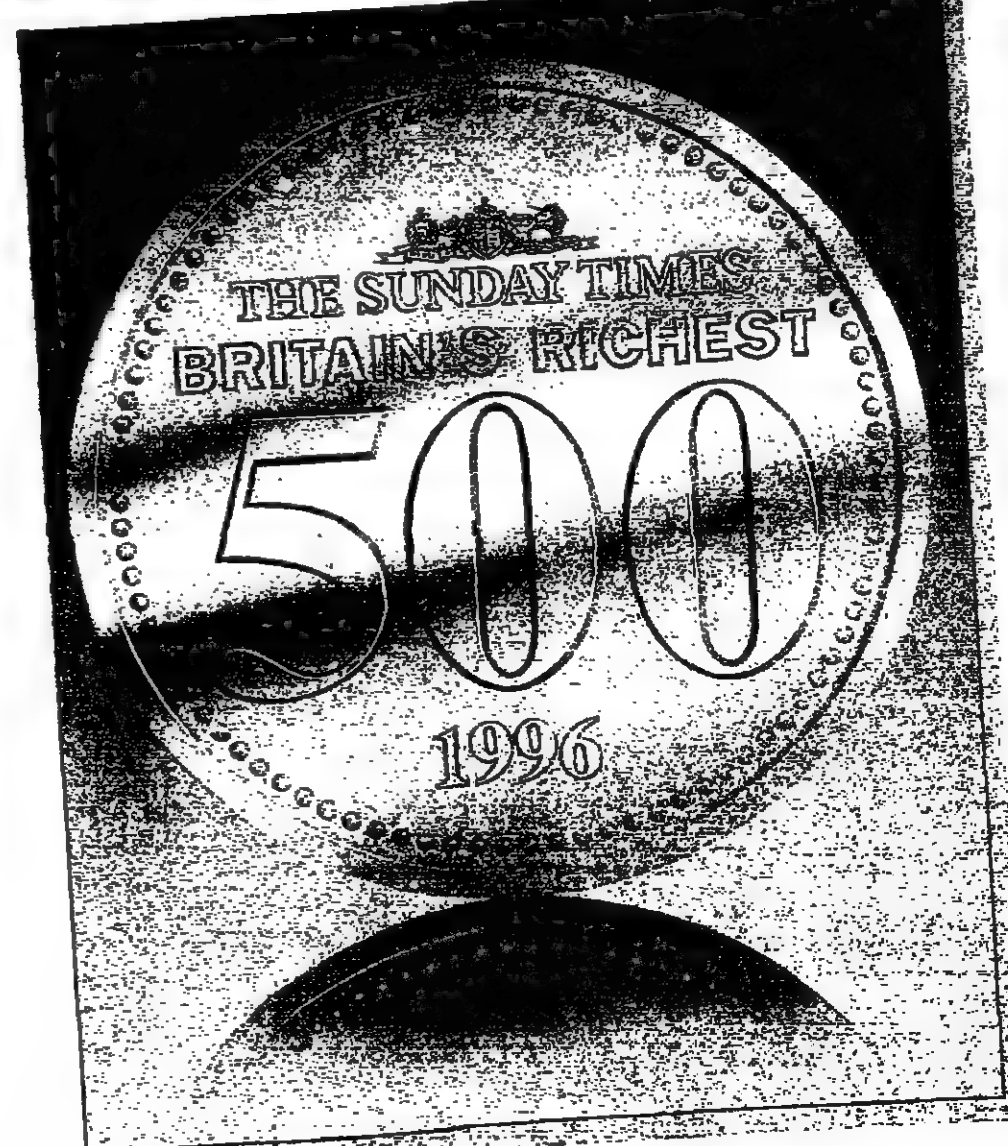


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Michael Binyon takes a wry father's view of all-night jam sessions and sweaty pub gigs



The Replicant Saints go marching in — and, they hope, up — with, clockwise from left, Struan Robertson, Tom Rogerson, Martin Binyon, Tom Dunn, Eva Rice and William Prideaux

My son, the rock star

Of course if he had wanted to play in an orchestra, I would have been intrusively ambitious. You must sit the exams. Don't waste your time at parties. Listen to this player, that recording, come to this concert and I'll get tickets. I could see the legend beginning: the seven-year-old in Russia taking piano lessons with Natasha, the encouraging school reports from Mr Johns, the teenager trumpeting Bach on the school chapel organ, evenings of Beethoven and Mozart on the Yamaha ... My son, the pianist, I would perhaps boast one day. But no. Reality usually dawns

on most parents, and when the house shook all day with the Beatles, the Rolling Stones and Muddy Waters, I knew that the classical world had been vanquished by the more raucous tastes of a different generation. So it was to be pop instead. Drums all over the house. A keyboard on the dining-room table. Practice with the band: the first gig in a pub: all-night jamming sessions with Tom on the guitar trying out new rhythms, new lyrics. The first vital demonstration tape. But my son, the pop star? Impossible.

Well, not quite impossible it seems. The Replicant Saints have begun to go marching in — all six of them. They filled

the function room at the Dog and Fox more than a year ago — mostly with friends, girlfriends and supporters, of course, but with dry ice and some strobe lighting they put on a lively show. Things have got a bit more professional since then. The amplifiers have got bigger, the keyboard more sophisticated, the lyrics more subtle and wistful. At Christmas they played at the Half Moon in Putney — a vital first rung up the pop ladder, Martin insisted. We sneaked in for half an hour, and an uncertain pride vied in me with nostalgia — didn't I remember the raw energy, the fug, the showiness and the beery cheers in the hallowed

Sixties? Even Martin's great-aunt, 85, was impressed. "They make a terrible noise. And I really don't think the girl knows how to move at all." It was a compliment bound to assure success. Eva, the back-up singer, does know how to move, of course. Better still, with the surname Rice and a father who has written enough lyrics to make all Argentina cry, she knows how to move the diatrist and columnists. Her picture and the Replicant Saints made a national newspaper. A Bristol radio station followed. A Sunday tabloid promised a profile. And they all found an irresistible theme: not only is it a case of like father, like

daughter, but the men around her with wild hair and zany clothes are all Etonians. A toffs' band! Now, there's an item for the pop press. All that money spent on posh education, and today's OEs are going out to govern not the colonies but the other field where Britain now reigns supreme. A whole new meaning, perhaps, to the Playing Fields of Eton. We parents are less convinced. "You still have to pass the exams." I found myself saying, censoriously, "Have you done any work yet on the Victorians? What can you tell me about *In Memoriam*? You haven't even read any Tennyson yet."

But for a 21-year-old the question whether Gallipoli failed because of poor execution or was a flawed idea from the start seems less urgent than how to design a striking cover for the demo tape or how much improvisation should take over from the basic rhythm.

And then what about jobs? When the Saints, scattered now across the universities of the country, get together for practice there is talk of a proper tour: expenses-only appearances at anniversary bashes and college functions rising through pubs, clubs and a nice little earner at an Oxford ball to bigger halls and more ambitious venues.

Perhaps I should be dreaming of the bonanza, the moment when the star will buy his little old parents a cottage in Cornwall. Dream on. "Haven't you been down to the careers centre yet?" I nag. "Haven't you any idea what you want to do?"

One promising post-Saints career would be a politician. It seems that every Tory minister nowadays spent his youth in a pop band, and some, such as John Redwood, seem to be reverting to happier, wetter days: the outspoken backbencher now confesses to liking Britpop and is fishing for the student vote. And wasn't Tony Blair in a student rock group? Down Under, Paul Keating managed a band before taking up politics. And in Norway at least the addition carries on: the Finance Minister plays a guitar in a group, and several of his Cabinet colleagues shed their suits at weekends and make their statements with guitars and

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BREATHABLE

ALL
WEATHER
CLOTHING

drums: all quite natural in Norway.

There comes the dreadful realisation that I ought to take a vague, parental interest in the field. I know about plectrums, I can distinguish some elements of Britpop, I am used to James Brown and the JB's and like blues in limited doses.

I have discussed touch-sensitive keyboards and synthesizers with other colleagues also being pressed for a generous parental loan. Beyond that, it is hopeless.

But all communication is not lost: Martin also cherishes a passion for opera and is trying, gently, to educate an illiterate father. "Do you want to go to *La traviata*? Shall I try for tickets?" It's code, of course, and means: I want to get to this performance, but I need you to buy the tickets. I usually fall for it. And I shall sneak into the Half Moon on Tuesday when the Replicant Saints are back, by special request. Up there, slick in black, will be My Son the Pop Star.

It seems every Tory minister spent his youth in a pop group

Ambition that flies sky high

Norris McWhirter on the deadly urge to break records

In the United States a sudden large crowd is often compared to a posse of lawyers around a lift accident. Yesterday's tragic light aircraft crash in the business area of Cheyenne, Wyoming, by a seven-year-old "pilot", Jessica Dubroff, seems likely to create both legal precedents and new laws.

Taking off in a rainstorm on Wednesday from Half Moon Bay, California, the Cessna 177B four-seater had aboard the 4ft 2in tall Jessica, her father Lloyd Dubroff and a flight instructor. Jessica was fitted with leg extensions to enable her to reach the foot controls. Before take-off she pronounced: "I am going to break the record."

Her father confined himself to the comment: "I would be more worried about her horseback riding."

Knowing the vicarious pleasure that parents and grandparents derive from the precocity of their progeny, successive editors of the *Guinness Book of Records* have long had a policy of censoring the publication of records of, for instance, the youngest swimmer or the youngest marathon runner.

There can be few sights more cruel than loving parents working on their reflected glory image. One of the most harrowing cases was the postwar one of an Australian father, determined that his four-month-old daughter should become the world's youngest unaccompanied swimmer.

The record to which the late Jessica Dubroff was probably referring was so heavily publicised on the front pages of American newspapers that it appears in order to recite it. On February 24, 1983, the freckled Cody A. Locke flew a Cessna 150 solo near Medulla airfield, Mexico, aged nine years 316 days.

In Britain the extremes are less extreme. The RAF, during the Second World War, accepted a certain Thomas Dobney for flying training. It was only when he was sporting his "wings" and the three stripes of a sergeant that he admitted that he had overstated his age and was in fact only 15 years 5 months old. However, he was not even the British record holder because, in Decem-

ber 1942, an aircraft-crazy boy named James Studeley, aged 14 years 5 months, not only took off on a maiden joyride in an unattended Piper Cub trainer aircraft, but landed it in one piece. He then opened the door to help out his younger brother, a 13-year-old passenger. The local constabulary at Ludgershall, Wiltshire, were nonplussed as to what precise offence had been committed.

From a passenger's point of view the oldest pilot might seem almost as dangerous as the youngest. In 1979 Ed McCarty of Kimberley, Idaho, was still keeping his 30-year-old



Fatal flight: Jessica

Ercoupe in the air by dint of virtually rebuilding it, until he was 94.

The legendary Air Commodore Harold "Daddy" Probyn, CBE, DSO, who had flown in the First World War in the Royal Flying Corps, was still flying in Kenya 67 years later, aged 92. More recently in 1993, Stanley Wood (1896-1994) of Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex, was still taking the controls of a Piper Cherokee Warrior in a flying career which spanned 80 per cent of the history of aviation, which began in 1903, when the Wright brothers first flew in their stiff collars, ties and dark business suits at Kill Devil Hill, Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

One can only suspect that Sir Christopher Chataway, chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority, had not got to hear of Stanley Wood. Sir Christopher records in *Who's Who* that he himself "briefly held the world 5,000-metre record" and clearly understands the human passion for breaking records.

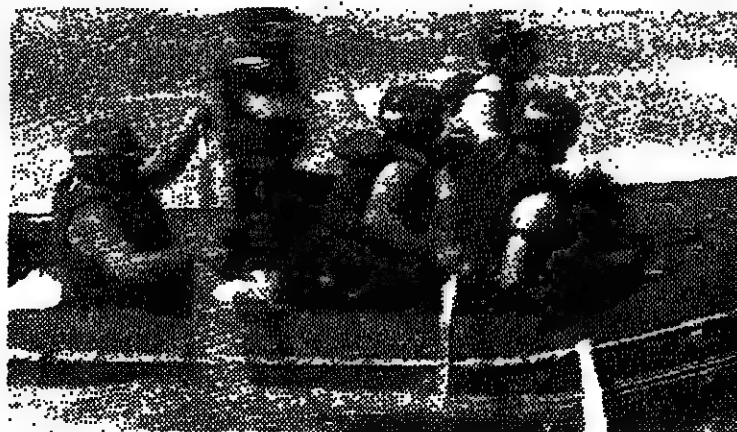
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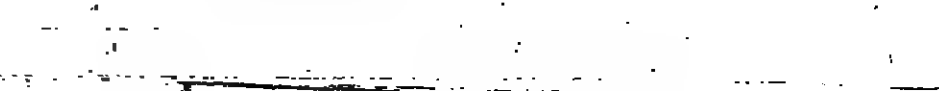
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Philip Howard



■ High seriousness is still the hallmark of classics — but it's fun, too

Nottingham: When that April with his showers sweet, the drought of March hath pierced to the root, then people long to go on conference. The Classical Association begins its annual meeting here today. About 300 professional, amateur and aspirant classicists are coming back to bed, and lectures exploring such topics as violent women and the virtue of single combat, father of the European duel. And *The Times* is here to cover it. Why? St Jerome's anti-feminism and Aristotle's notions about dreams may be fascinating for the curious. But they do not sound promising material for the front-page "splash" or even the quirky "basement" article of a modern newspaper. Where is the beef in Boethius? What is the relevance of Ancient Rome?

Well, the sentimental answer is that from the beginning *The Times* has always covered the Classical Association, familiarly known as the Class Ass. It was even launched by a letter to the Editor from Professor J.P. Postgate of Cambridge. Its first meeting was presided over by the Master of the Rolls and attended by the Vice-Chancellors of Oxford and Cambridge and the great and grave from universities, schools, Church, and Parliament. Its first meeting was allocated two full columns in our newspaper, which then had only eight columns for news. And much of that was given over to high-minded worry about the "decline" of the classics.

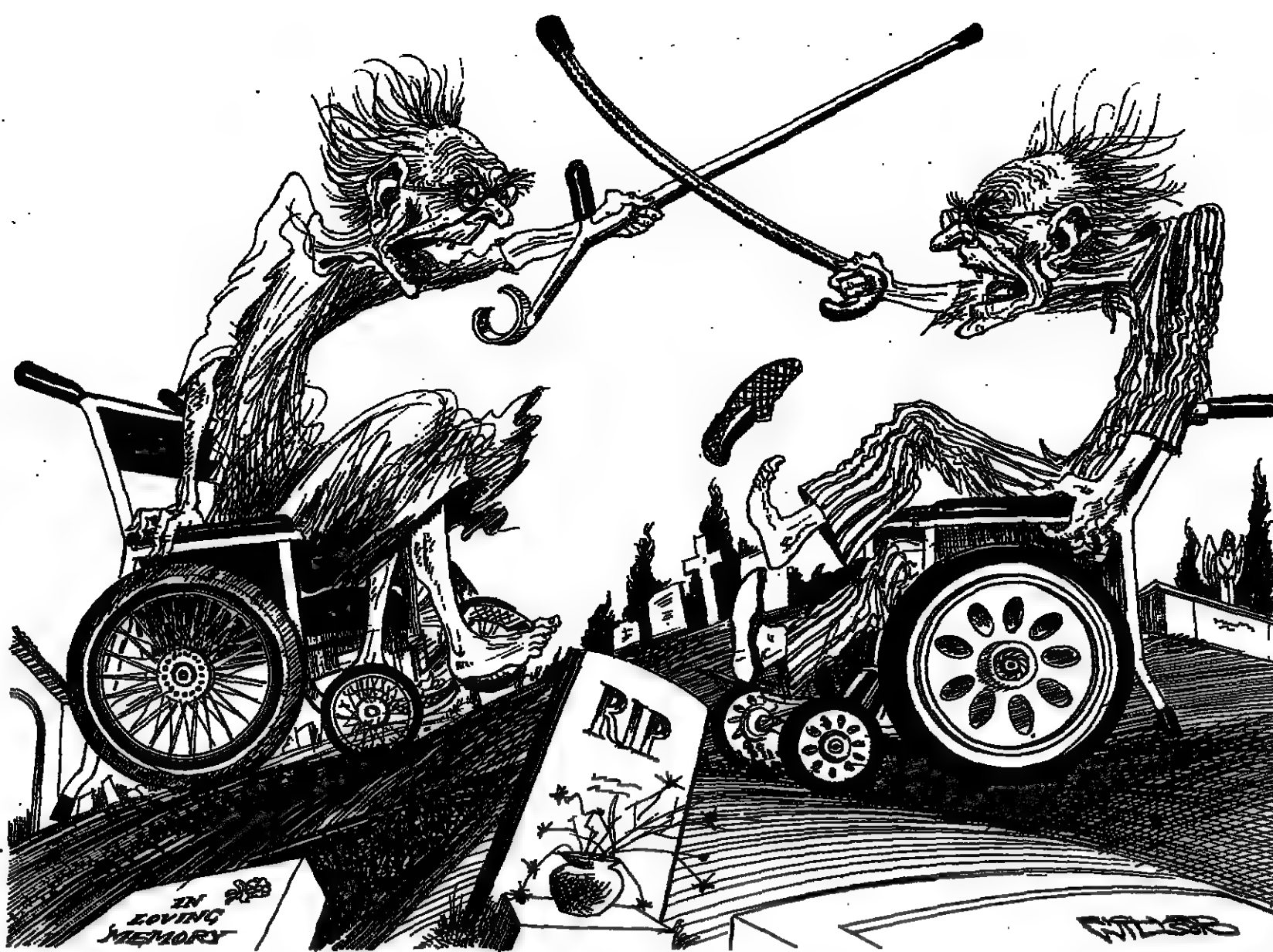
Professor Postgate said that there was a twofoldness, a feverishness, a frivolity about modern literature of which they would look in vain for parallels in the literature of Greece and Rome. "Think of Plato and Rudyard Kipling!" (laughter). Kipling was the Martin Amis of the day, but that first audience would not have laughed so loud if they could have read Kipling's brilliant translations of Horace. Professor Postgate was scornful about literature in translation, calling it "tinned salmon". What would he say today, when most of the classics in schools is done in translation, and few, even at universities, compose prose and verse?

But he would be wrong to bear his breast and raise the old ululation that classics are dead. Each generation rediscovers the classics for its own preoccupations, and finds new relevance in them. In 1903, at the high tide of Empire, the classics were the training for the modern procurator, praetors and prefects. An apt quotation from Horace was as important to a political soundbite as a reference to a soap opera or a pop singer is today. The papers to the Class Ass a century ago were ripe with lessons from imperial history, and joys and riddles.

The archbishops and prime ministers at that first meeting would have been astonished at how our notion of the classics has expanded. This week we shall range from proto-archaeology to the more disreputable Byzantine emperors. There will be 100 lectures instead of half a dozen. And instead of grave professors, many of them will be young postgraduates and teachers chalking up merits for their CVs. Their topics include many that Professor Postgate would have deemed frivolous, such as women, slaves, the enemy within and other underdogs of the ancient world.

Professor Postgate's eyes would pop at our panel on literary psychoanalysis and some of the "back to basics" deconstruction and reductionism that will go on here this week. He would be gratified by the sessions on such hardy perennialisms as Greek tragedy and Roman history. He would be delighted that Professor Jonathan Powell of Newcastle University (the star of our generation) is running a Latin prose seminar for anybody who still enjoys writing stylish Latin as a challenge and a pleasure.

And he would be relieved to find that, a century on, the classics are alive and strutting their stuff in Nottingham. They are still relevant because they are the foundations of our civilisation: literature and culture. The old things still make news because they are eternally new, and more interesting than the daily ephemera. And they are fun. And that is why *The Times* still covers the Class Ass. How could it not?



Deliver us from hatred

Where brotherly love and collegiality have been poisoned, animosity may be implacable this side of the grave

This is a story about hatred, but it is a very sad kind of hatred, the very worst kind. And what would be the worst kind of hatred? Well, I call it the worst because it should be the most powerful kind of happiness and love, but is, in fact, the opposite. Indeed, it is doubly sad, for I am speaking about two men who should be showing others how to love, because they are from the same family. And yet the haters in this sad story are not just two men who hate each other, they are two brothers who hate each other.

Before I start, I must do some difficult thinking myself, for I have to ask myself if I hate anyone — anyone at all. And I also have to look back on anger to see if I have borne hatred in the past. An answer to such questions cannot be quickly and simply found, presumably because the thing we are examining is so difficult to define.

It seems that hatred is a very powerful word, not to be used lightly or without careful thought, even by the truly wronged. After all, the *Prayer Book* asks delivery from "hypocrisy, envy, hatred and malice", and I think that the *Prayer Book* felt hatred more powerfully than the other sins. True, the child demanding but not getting another chocolate will stamp his foot and tell his mother he hates her, but we smile at that kind of hate because it is unreal and momentary. After all, if mother thought her offspring really hated her, there would be thoughts in the nursery so terrible that the world would spin round and crumble. No, we are not talking about real hatred there.

Try to examine the real kind. Try to cross the bridge from nursery to reality. Try to understand what real hatred comprises. Try to call up the past, even a savage past, mired in anger, but one in which you now think you cannot find the hatred that you once felt. Almost all of us will find, to our great astonishment — certainly to mine — that it is almost impossible to draw up a substantial list of those whom you truly hate. You dislike X, you dislike him very much — perhaps he bores you, perhaps he sneers at you, perhaps he says horrible things about one you love. Nevertheless, what you feel is disdain, anger, disgust, mendacity, cowardice, meanness, stupidity — put them all together, and even now we are not feeling true hatred.

It seems that hatred is almost neglig-

ble. If so, three cheers for the human race; however much it dislikes its neighbours, it doesn't hate them. But I did not say that hatred doesn't exist: I said it was very rare indeed. You see, the human race is a very fine thing, but it is not entirely perfect. And to prove it, I bring forward the brothers Maurice and Hyman Berger, respectively aged 75 and 81, and who hate each other so profoundly, so remorselessly, so crazily, that Maurice very recently took a car-jack handle and repeatedly hit Hyman, causing injuries to his face and his arms, after which Maurice smashed the windscreen and window of his car.

In my time I have said much about judges, most of it derogatory, but in this case I would have liked to leap into the middle of the courtroom and shake the judge by the hand. And why? Because, when he finished judging the case of the two brothers, he said to the pitiful pair that "Heaven knows, we have a short enough time on this earth — you and your brother rather less than most... I shall be rather more impressed if that remorse is demonstrated by a real effort to make your peace with your brother for the few remaining years allotted to you."

Now then, hatred is surely one of the most terrible stopping-points in man's struggle from birth to death. But when the haters come from the same body, a mere six years apart, we must stop and think very hard. It is odd enough to have siblings who do not like each other, but hatred? Hatred? Hatred so powerful that it comes to blows, and blows that amount to (I quote the judge) "a vicious and potentially lethal assault"? And, for that matter, "Over several months, more than 400 early-hours calls were recorded until Hyman began High Court proceedings that put Maurice at risk of jail if he persisted." And even,

"Annette [Hyman's wife] received an elaborately-wrapped, perfumed parcel addressed in Maurice's handwriting. At first she thought it might be a peace offering, but when she opened it she found it contained what seemed to be human excrement."

That is real hatred, and hatred within the family, perhaps the worst kind. But the very worst kind is what followed the end of the court case: it was easy to miss altogether. It was only ten words, saying "the brothers left court without a word to each other".

I shall return to the brothers, but I must pause to inspect the two doctors (and surely doctors should give a good impression) who shared a surgery for 20 years, but then fell out. And "oh, what a fall was there". Each hated the other, hated so much that no fewer than six times the police had to be called.

And once the surgery staff had to lock themselves in the waiting room for safety, so violent was the fighting between these two healers. And worse still: the Health Services Authority became alarmed about the effect on the health of the patients. Inevitably, there was a tribunal, costing some £100,000, with 37 witnesses and 860 documents. And that was because two doctors had fallen out, after many years of it, seemed, perfect harmony.

Now, within the doctors' surgery, there raged true hatred: it was the exact parallel of the rage within the family. One of the two healers accused the other of alcohol dependency and drug abuse, adding that he turned up to work in a dishevelled state and was incoherent and unintelligible, plus smashing the other's computer. The first healer accused the other of rifling his patients' files and spitting at him, and each of them claimed that the other tried to steal the other's patients. And just as the two

brothers "left the court without a word to each other" so "both men were unrepentant and determined to stay".

What lesson does the story of the crazy brothers and the no less crazy doctors teach? Many, perhaps most, would say that the world is a random shuffling of the cards, and the shuffler can have no hope of finding any sense anywhere in the universe. It is tempting to take that view, but I do not. I believe that the lesson, when rightly studied, will take the opposite conclusion. We have seen two pairs of haters; and only two. Why do you suppose that the pitiful brothers and the pitiful doctors found themselves in the headlines? Surely, the answer is because such tragic absurdities are so rare. And I come back to the extraordinary thought that in civilised countries there is true hatred, but it is almost incredibly rare. Why?

I can give only one answer: it is that human beings, who, seeing the world around them, weigh up — not consciously, of course — the pros and cons of life and what we make of it. Why, when we read about the brothers who hate each other, and the doctors who similarly cannot live in harmony even in a place made entirely for healing, we are puzzled, and sometimes much more than puzzled. Look back for a moment at what I said when I began: that hatred is astonishingly rare.

It is, but just look about you: there is fighting, there is cheating, there is stealing, there is stabbing, there is murder itself, and yet hatred remains infrequent. There is another clue, and a powerful one: take the madmen who hate their brothers, and take the other madmen who, examining patients, are still raging in hatred against their partners. What do we see first about these two haters? It is not the raging or the name-calling, it is only the stupidity and the silliness, so we are free to despise such people, rightly, as fools.

Can folly alone push out hatred? I am not sure. Can hatred push out folly? Alas, yes. That wise judge urged wisely. But I fear that his words have fallen on barren ground, and it will be too late to realise that the judge was right. And those doctors, too, will go to their graves without understanding why. And all they needed to understand was to look about and see so few consumed with hatred.

Elegy for an African Utopia

Richard West on Liberia, end of an American dream

The collapse of Liberia brings to an end the old dream of generations of Africans exiled by slavery in America, of going back to live in the country of their ancestors. The "Back to Africa" movement, as it was called in the 1920s, had come into being a century earlier, when a group of free black Americans first settled in Liberia.

The American Colonization Society, founded by northern Evangelical Christians and Southern politicians, who wanted, for different reasons, to help free, indigent blacks to start a new life in Africa. The idea had come from the British settlement in nearby Sierra Leone, founded in 1787 with some of the 30,000 blacks then living in England.

The first colonists in Liberia met furious resistance from the natives; moreover the death toll from tropical fevers proved that this was not simply the white man's grave. However, by 1847, Liberia was robust enough to declare itself an independent republic under President Joseph Jenkins Roberts, a light-skinned "man of colour" as he called himself.

The United States would not recognise Liberia until 1862, largely because it did not want a black ambassador in Washington. But already in 1848 President Roberts was received in London by Queen Victoria, who presented Liberia with a transport ship and a four-gun sloop.

In the debate over slavery in the United States before the Civil War, the abolitionists denounced the American Colonization Society, accusing the settlers in Liberia of slaughtering native Africans. The leading anti-slavery propagandist, William Lloyd Garrison, said that the few thousand settlers sent to Liberia could not relieve the plight of the two million slaves and half a million free blacks in the United States.

Nevertheless, Liberia in the mid-19th century flourished from cotton, sugar, and the first palm kernels shipped to Europe. The native coffee, the famous Liberian, was sent to New York and Liverpool on ships flying the Lone Star flag, actually owned by Liberians, as few are today. Even the African explorer, Sir Richard Burton, who was a negrophobe, compared Liberia favourably with Britain's Sierra Leone.

In the 1860s a pure black Liberian, Benjamin Anderson, made a journey to the interior, getting on famously with the Mandingo people, and afterwards writing a much better book than Burton's. Edward Wilmot Blyden, a Liberian scholar, wrote what are now classic works on the syllabuses of black studies departments everywhere. Blyden, who was a friend of Gladstone, was twice his country's ambassador to London.

Liberia suffered from the 1870s onwards, when the European powers joined in the "scramble for Africa", annexing its hinterland and undercutting its exports. Brazil started to grow Liberian coffee. Some Liberians, including Blyden, believed that Liberia should exchange independence for British protection and financial support.

Liberia was saved from bankruptcy after the First World War by the American Firestone Rubber Company. In the early 1920s, the United States consumed 80 per cent of the world's rubber, mostly in car tyres, but grew less than 1 per cent under its own flag. By an agreement in 1926, Firestone was given Liberia's existing rubber plantations, as well as a 99-year lease on a million acres of forest, the right of harbour construction and effective control of the revenue.

The Europeans, especially the British, hotly resented this US intrusion, and during the 1930s tried to prove that Liberia was engaged in the slave trade, selling labour to Spanish colonies. In fact the abuse of forced labour was no worse than in several British colonies. The novelist Graham Greene, in his travel book *Journey Without Maps* in 1936, compared Liberia favourably with Sierra Leone.

During the 1920s, Marcus Garvey, a Jamaica-born journalist and orator, started a Back to Africa movement in the United States, exhorting blacks to take pride in their colour, and also denouncing mulattoes and Jews. At a huge convention in Harlem in 1920, attended by uniformed ranks of the African Legion, the Universal Cross Nurses and the black Eagle Flying Corps, Garvey promised: "We shall now organise the four hundred million negroes of the world into a vast organisation to plant the banner of freedom in the great continent of Africa."

Garvey proposed in 1924 that the first 30,000 emigrants from the United States should sail to Liberia on ships of his own Black Star line. However the Back to Africa movement collapsed when the Liberian Government refused to accept these immigrants. But the idea lived on into the 1960s, when black Americans opened the best ice-cream parlour in Monrovia, the capital of Liberia.

Under the rule of the genial, corrupt President W.V.S. Tubman, one of the oligarchy of American-Liberians, the country survived into the 1970s without the war and terror that had engulfed most of independent Africa. The end came in 1980, with the first of many military revolts, when Tubman's successor and most of the American-Liberian elite were tied to stakes on the beach and machine-gunned.

Richard West is the author of *Back to Africa*, a History of Sierra Leone and Liberia.

Ooh ah, scholar

ERIC CANTONA has leapt from the football field into the groves of academe. The footballing philosopher is to be the subject of a doctoral thesis.

A Frenchman affiliated to the sociology department at Leicester University has been given permission to do a PhD in "Cantona studies". Claude Boli, brother of the former French international Basile Boli, is using Cantona as an example to analyse the differences between French and English soccer.



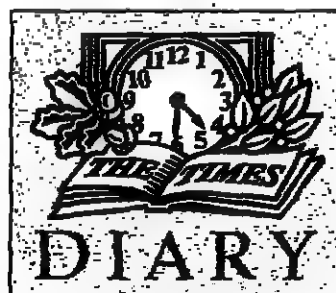
Thinking man: Eric Cantona

"Eric has said he will help me with my research," says Boli. "I have known him since we were teenagers." Boli is living in Manchester while he interviews Cantona, who has invited him to all United's home games. Cantona fancies himself as something of a man of letters. His most famous, if somewhat baffling, utterance came at a press conference after his arrest for kicking a Crystal Palace supporter: "When the seagulls are following the trawler it is because they think the sardines will be thrown into the sea." Nobody understood what he was on about, but he has at least found a soulmate in Boli: the two are having trumpet lessons together.

Bushed

AS CONSERVATIVES continue to squirm at the sight of Tony Blair schmoozing with President Clinton, they rue the day they decided to help George Bush in 1992. Back then, Mark Fulbrook was the strategist at Conservative Central Office assigned the job of muck-raking on candidate Bill Clinton for the Republicans. Clinton has never forgiven John Major.

While the Tories have suffered since 1992, Fulbrook, now a polit-



ical consultant, has thrived. He has helped several young Tory thrusts to find safe seats as well as helping Norman Lamont, whose long search for a seat had taken on biblical proportions. This summer, however, Clinton should watch his back again. Fulbrook, a former adviser to Speaker Newt Gingrich, will be renewing his American connection by helping the Republicans with their convention.

Screen first

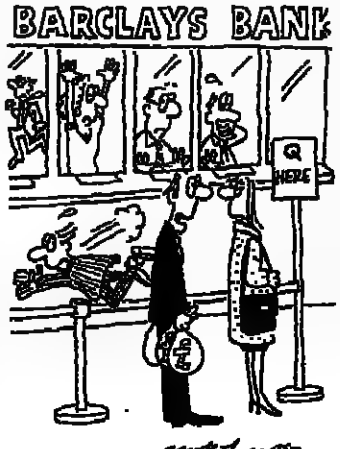
WITH THE gushing publicity surrounding Prince Edward's forthcoming programme about the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, one could be forgiven for thinking that his television career has finally gone up a gear.

He may soon be forced to make an abrupt pit-stop, however. Lawyers are threatening to pull another of his documentaries, due to be shown on April 22, about one of

the finest racing cars ever built. The Top Gear special, about a missing Mercedes Silver Arrow built by Hitler and later acquired by Nicolae Ceausescu, has been 18 months in the making. And as screening day approaches, a fretful Prince has been daily on the blower to top BBC executives to find out what's going on.

"Basically he came up with a much harder story than he was expecting and I don't think he knows quite what they are going to do with it," says one source. The BBC admits to trouble. "There have been considerable problems with this project. It has been put back and put back."

There's no sign of the Duke of Edinburgh easing up on public



"I made a bomb this week"

duties just because Sunday April 21 happens to be his wife's 70th birthday. Rose-tinted monarchists hoping that the Sovereign will enjoy a quiet birthday lunch with Prince Philip are to be disappointed. The old boy plans to attend a charity cricket match instead.

Stumped

MAJOR Ron Ferguson is bating for Jilly Cooper. At the launch of her new novel about fumbings in the orchestra pit, *Appassionata*, he suggested that the cricket world should be the arena for her next blockbuster. The "galloping" Major, who has bowled the occasional maiden over, says Jilly has already dropped in to research the idea at his new indoor cricket school. "There are the same old-field shenanigans in cricket as in anything else," declared the Major. And he should know.

Hopping mad

SPORTS NEWS from Sweden: a springy character by the name of Snuffy has hopped into the record books as the winner of the inaugural Rabbit Olympics. The most ludicrous activity now in existence, bunny athletics claims to be the fastest-growing sport in Scandinavia. Channel 4 has been covering the event.

The floppy-eared were fed a strict pre-competition diet of ba-



Bunny boom in Sweden

nanas and sugar. The shock of the tournament was that the Swedish favourite, Flames of Fame, took only the bronze medal. "She had sex before the tournament," explained her owner. "Always a disaster."

One's nag

I WAS delighted to see that Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother yesterday enjoyed better fortune on the turf than in the Irish National on Monday, when her chaser Norman Conqueror cracked a knee and was later put down.

At Fontwell in West Sussex, Her Majesty's light blue and buff colours were carried to victory by Keel Row, an 8-1 chance in the Gallagher Group Handicap Hurdle. "Great fillip to everyone, especially Her Majesty," said trainer Tim Thomson Jones. "It's just what we needed."

P.H.S



INS AND OUTS OF EMU

Monetary sovereignty is non-negotiable

Kenneth Clarke meets his European Union counterparts today in Verona to discuss the future relationship between the countries that may join a European Monetary Union and those which, by choice or necessity, remain outside. This will be a first in the "ins and outs" debate that has barely begun. But already there are complaints about "free riders" and "competitive" devaluations, and demands for common discipline, financial penalties and even trade sanctions within Europe.

These menacing phrases are heard mostly in France but also in other EU countries and in the European Commission. They make economic nonsense: trade sanctions are the last way to promote greater convergence between Europe's economies. Such penalties would also be illegal. But there is political significance in these mere threats. They underline the potential of monetary union between a small group of EU countries not only to damage the EU's only great achievement, the European single market, but also to threaten the cohesion and workability of the EU itself.

The issue at Verona is not whether the Chancellor will be caught in a monetary ambush. In the first place, the purported trap, compulsory membership of a new European Monetary System for all states which do not participate in monetary union, is not yet even designed. In addition, were any such scheme on the table, the Chancellor could and should argue that there is no basis in the Maastricht treaty for compelling Britain or any other country to join a new exchange-rate mechanism, or to rejoin the old. Article 109m of the treaty requires each state to "treat its exchange-rate policy as a matter of common interest", but how it does so is up to each government.

This debate may never have to be joined if, at Verona, Mr Clarke establishes some basic principles. The first is that there can never be

any legal justification for tampering with the single market, full participation in which is the unequivocal treaty-based right of every member of the EU. The second is that Britain will accept no dilution, however disguised, of the provision in the Maastricht opt-out protocol which states that "the United Kingdom shall retain its powers in the field of monetary policy in accordance with national law". This would rule out British agreement to plans by the European Commission or by any EU government to introduce formal or even informal controls over the economies of non-members — such as Hans Tietmeyer's proposal for a system of "regular surveillance" by the president of the future European Central Bank.

Mr Clarke should also challenge France and Germany to explain why, if they are as convinced as they claim that Emu will confer huge economic benefits on its members, they are so worried that the "outs" will have "unfair" advantages over those tied into Emu. He should invite the Commission to explain how it can argue simultaneously that "competitive devaluations" are doomed to fail, and yet be so anxious to guard against exchange rate flexibility.

John Major opened a can of worms when he challenged Britain's EU partners to study the impact of a partial Emu. The economist's answer to his questions about "how a single currency and the currencies of the rest of the EU would coexist" and "what would it mean for the single market" is that the situation will differ little from today's *de facto* market. It is the political answers that spell trouble. The purpose claimed for Emu is to enhance political as well as economic integration. By their determination to control the exchange rates of the "outs", the "ins" could put at risk the very goals for which they have required their electorates to sacrifice so much. That is what should be on the agenda at Verona.

ROCK SOLID

Smuggling is wrong, but so is Spain's attitude to Gibraltar

Ever since it ceded Gibraltar to Britain in 1713, Spain has pretended that the Treaty of Utrecht did not exist. For over two centuries and a half, our relationship with Madrid has tended to be one of rivalry and ill-regard, prompted largely by Spain's unwillingness to digest British sovereignty on the Rock. Gibraltar's status as British territory has never been in reasonable doubt: and its original, lawful acquisition by the Crown was underlined yet again by the referendum of 1967, in which a mere 44 people voted for Spanish sovereignty — as opposed to more than 12,000 who reaffirmed their association with Britain.

This week, Gibraltar has again reared its head in Hispano-British relations. A Spanish police helicopter sank at sea on Wednesday while in pursuit of a Gibraltarian smuggler's launch, unfortunately killing an officer of the Guardia Civil. There is some initial suggestion that the smugglers may have caused the crash — a broken ear has been found in the helicopter's rear rotor. Britain's Ambassador to Madrid was summoned yesterday to the Spanish Foreign Office for a considerable dressing-down, and Spain has once more accused Britain of "failing to eradicate the trafficking which proceeds from Gibraltar".

There is no doubt that smugglers of tobacco and certain proscribed drugs operate out of Gibraltar. They secure their illegal goods in nearby Morocco and land them into the hands of their Spanish partners-in-crime, on the largely unpatrolled coast of southern Spain. Madrid, as we have said before, has a proper interest in stopping this criminal trade. What is in question, however, is the manner in which it

approaches the issue. Regrettably, Spain's methods have been consistently intemperate. In suggesting that Britain is "not doing enough" — and that the Gibraltarian authorities are "turning a blind eye" — Madrid not only adopts a blunderbuss approach to a complex problem, it fails also to recognise that considerable advances have been made by the administration on the Rock in the fight against smuggling.

That administration recognises, also, that it is not in Gibraltar's own interest to allow the smuggling to get out of control: and if this was not already clear on the Rock, it was made doubly so last July by Douglas Hurd, then Foreign Secretary. But there is no evidence to show that the administration of Joe Bossano, the Chief Minister, is evading its responsibilities, or that it is in any way conniving at the contraband business: for the Spanish to suggest otherwise is both invidious and unhelpful.

Spain needs to handle this problem with greater sophistication. Co-operation, not confrontation, is what is now needed. Unfortunately, to co-operate with Gibraltar on any matter is still anathema to Madrid, obsessed as it is with its long-running dream of reclamation. The Rock, however, is not there for the taking: Spain must focus, instead, on its more immediate interests.

Yet if Madrid discharges its ire in the traditional manner — by imposing even more arduous controls on the land border between the Rock and La Linea, in Spain — Britain must leave its EU partner in no doubt that this would be both improper and unlawful. The problems of Gibraltar can be addressed only with a cool head: it is no good for Spain to stamp its feet.

DUETS AND DUELS

How to keep the box office Bizet

Operatic duets are not restricted to *Eugene Onegin* and one does not have to go to Bayreuth to see love and power contend for mastery — our Arts page today is the stage for a conflict as passionate as any penned by Tchaikovsky or Wagner. Our opera critic Rodney Milnes and the impresario Raymond Gubbay, point scores at each other in a titanic tussle over bringing high art to big audiences. Mr Milnes stands, art to big audiences. Mr Gubbay, in a broadly, for standards. Mr Gubbay, in a word, for crowds, but even though their *amour propre* forbids agreement it is not impossible to see merit in them both.

The cause of their falling-out is Mr Gubbay's production of *La Bohème* at the Albert Hall earlier this year. Mr Gubbay wanted to extend opera's appeal with an accessible show. Mr Milnes savaged it and Mr Gubbay believes the critic is motivated by a base desire to keep opera elitist and preserve his pleasures from the depredate of the swinish multitude. The accusations of the swinish multitude. Opera is, if true, would be a grave one. Opera is the empress of arts, bringing music, drama and design together in one exquisite fusion.

As Ernest Bevin once observed over the *Musé Saint-Georges*, nothing is too good for the greatest possible access to opera is to be abhorred. Like fine burgundy, opera is complex enough to appeal to the intellectual, but sensually powerful enough to sweep anyone away. In the gods at La Scala the anyone away. In the gods at La Scala the move in tandem with the tenor and scores of

horny hands wield imaginary batons. If the workers of Milan can appreciate opera why shouldn't Basildon man go to *Bohème*?

But arguing for access should not mean demanding dilution. Opera, like wine, should not be watered down and Mr Milnes is right to insist that standards be maintained. Provide new audiences with a second-rate or unnecessarily simplified show and they will ask what all the fuss is about. Not only will the newcomers lose out, but so will the Covent Garden elitists if popular prejudice holds their subsidised entertainment in low esteem.

The greatest barrier to more widespread appreciation of opera is still cost. Staging opera at its best will always be expensive. Orchestras, choruses and sets combine to make costs more mountainous than an interval plate of Pavarotti's pasta, but the most massive single burden of all is the fee demanded by the biggest stars. The Three Tenors may have popularised opera but a seat to see any one of them now costs rather nearer nine tenners.

Fortunately, from Opera North to the Welsh National Opera, there are flourishing British companies who stage stunning productions without asking the earth. A dash of Gubbay commercialism might help them to market their product more effectively, but cheaper should not mean cheapened. Under no circumstances should they stoop to conquer new crowds — as *Così Fan Tutte* shows, weakening to win new admirers is never worth it.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Problems in teaching and the decline of written English

From Mrs Jane Moran

Sir, For some time, various studies and my own experience within higher education have confirmed the findings that there has been a marked deterioration in standards of written English (report April 8; leading article, April 9). This situation has resulted in undergraduates being unable to express themselves adequately in writing. They are at a considerable disadvantage in constructing logical arguments and therefore unable to attain their academic potential.

Middlesex University has made a vigorous attempt over the past few years to combat this situation by providing classes in basic and academic written English for British students in the various faculties. These have been very successful, resulting in a significant improvement in the students' achievement within their core subjects. In addition, many more undergraduates have gone on to complete their studies. We have found this approach very cost-effective.

It is a national disgrace that standards of English have been allowed to fall. Until all our young people are provided with adequate writing skills, we are depriving them of the opportunity to reach their potential in many important areas of learning.

Yours faithfully,
JANE MORAN
(Senior lecturer),
Middlesex University,
School of Modern Languages,
Queensway, Enfield, Middlesex,
April 10.

From Mr A. G. Chapman

Sir, In your misguided attack on the teaching profession (leading article, April 9) you compare the assessments of individual teachers by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) with those of pupils, yet how unfair to them it would be to award qualifications on the basis of only two pieces of work completed over a week (report, March 21).

You make no mention of the fact that many Ofsted inspectors have never taught the national curriculum, or may have been ineffective teachers themselves.

Teachers are not demeaning their profession: I can hardly see experienced doctors or lawyers reacting any

more positively to the prospect of some lesser qualified inspectors sitting at their elbow for a week and passing subjective judgments on their professional skill and integrity.

Yours faithfully,
A. G. CHAPMAN,
18 Heyes Road,
Orrell, Wigan, Lancashire,
April 6.

From Dr Peter Greenhalgh

Sir, The trouble with the teaching profession, underlined by the NUT vote for unrepresentative militancy (report, April 9), is that it is not a profession at all. As long as it has "unions" and takes "industrial action" it will never have the popular respect afforded to professions regulated by truly professional institutions like the royal colleges of the medical and nursing professions or the equivalents to which accountants, architects, engineers or lawyers belong.

It is not just a matter of terminology but of ethos. A royal college of teaching could do much to restore the standards of a once proud and dedicated profession and also help depoliticise educational debate and policy.

Yours faithfully,
PETER GREENHALGH,
Westwood House,
Westwood, Southfleet, Kent,
April 9.

From Mr D. B. Jole

Sir, More may underlie the sharp decline in teenage written English than just the reluctance of many teachers to insist on the knowledge, and use, of grammar and syntax.

The teachers' union leading article calls upon to mend their ways by instructing more rigorously are presented rather as people who have, over a long period and for ideological reasons, withheld knowledge which they should now divulge to their pupils: the correct and effective writing of English. In fact, of course, many of these teachers are just as much victims of the long decline as their pupils are. If you asked them to teach sentence-structure, or grammar, they would, with honourable exceptions, have only a faint idea of what you were talking about.

I feel that the "melancholy roar" which you heard issuing from the

NUT Cardiff conference (leading article, April 9) contained a strong admixture of panic. It may be that some teachers are not so much opposed to change as alarmed (quite naturally) at the prospect of being required to teach what they ought to know something about, but don't.

Yours faithfully,
D. B. JOLE,
The Old Vicarage Cottage,
Cherterton, Oxfordshire,
April 9.

From the Archdeacon of Pontefract

Sir, The slide in teenagers' spelling skills coincides with the period in which the decline in the teaching of Latin has been most marked.

I would readily agree that the grammar of modern English needs to be dynamic, and not over-dependent on Latin syntax. But I would have thought it beyond doubt that a working knowledge of Latin vocabulary is essential if students are to spell with accuracy and confidence.

The rules governing prefix and suffix are particularly important and ignorance of them is at the root of many spelling mistakes. A few lessons in basic Latin for all examination students could improve the situation considerably.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN FLACK,
10 Arden Court,
Horbury, Wakefield,
West Yorkshire,
April 9.

From Mr Gershon Ellenbogen

Sir, The suggestion in the study by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (report, April 8) that "alright" is an incorrect spelling, as against "all right", is a piece of pedantry long overdue for scrapping. Such words as "altogether", "al-ready", "albeit" began as "all together", "all ready", "all be it", and the convenience of their alteration has made their present spelling standard. Surely it is time (whatever the dictionaries may say) to confer the same sanction on alright.

I am etc,
G. ELLENBOGEN,
9 Montagu Square, W1,
April 9.

what sort of country they want.

I suggest Elizabeth Noel is quite wrong in saying that religion cannot reveal where to put the cross at the polls. In the late 1980s I could no longer support the Conservatives as their actions offended my beliefs. My beliefs had not changed, and I now know where to put the cross.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD WARDEN,
2 Waterloo Way,
Bredon,
Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire,
April 10.

From Mrs Diana Stiles

Sir, William Rees-Mogg suggests that the Labour Party is likely to impose more taxes than the Tories ("Wine, Women and Labour", April 11).

As a Liberal Democrat, I believe that Labour would be more concerned to do something to redress the deficiencies in education, community care, the National Health Service, etc, while the Tories would be at pains to leave Lord Rees-Mogg with plenty of money to buy his champagne.

Did I read something recently about political parties and Christian attitudes?

Yours faithfully,
DIANA STILES,
1 Alces Place,
Firle Road, Seaford, East Sussex,
April 11.

drain on resources to keep in place.

If three major European airlines were to take a stand and refuse to honour abused tickets from other airlines or travel agents, these practices would soon cease and passengers could travel to airports with confidence.

Only the airlines can resolve this problem, not the International Air Transport Association; it is their product that is being exploited, and it only needs the good management which exists in some airlines but not in others to eliminate this costly system.

Yours faithfully,
KENNETH CAMPBELL,
129 Staines Road,
Laleham, Staines, Middlesex,
April 6.

place it in the hands of unelected judges thereby reducing the ability of the ordinary man to control his own destiny. They are necessary in federations but in unitary states such as ours merely interfere with the supremacy of Parliament.

The arbitrary abolition and equally arbitrary restoration of the death penalty in the United States of America by the Supreme Court without a single vote in Congress is a fine example of how such systems work in practice. I, like David Selbourne (article, March 29), prefer democracy, thank you.

Yours faithfully,
J. A. DAVIS,
(Clerk to the Justices, Kingston upon Thames 1982-1993),
54 Woodlands Road,
Bookham, Surrey,
April 6.

Mary, Mary quite incomprehensible

From Miss Sandy Cartier

Sir, Your theatre critic, Benedict Nightingale, recently commented on the portrayal of Mary by the French actress, Isabelle Huppert, in the current production of Schiller's *Mary Stuart* at the Royal National Theatre ("Queenly quarrels with an acute accent", Arts, March 23).

Mr Nightingale wrote that Miss Huppert speaks our language "half as comprehensibly" as the actor who plays the part of the French ambassador, and he refers to her "rush of dropped vowels and blurred syllables". These were not harsh comments.

I am afraid that I found Miss Huppert's delivery incomprehensible in its entirety, which was irritating, particularly as a new translation was on offer. For once in my life, I decided to complain.

In response, Richard Eyre (the RNT's artistic director) wrote me a letter in which he admits that Miss Huppert's accent is strong, but says that "she speaks fluent English and has worked hard at adopting English speech rhythms and patterns. This will undoubtedly improve as time goes on."

However, he then posits that "her delivery of the lines further heightens the isolation and bewilderment of the character she is playing". On this view, incomprehensibility must be some kind of litmus test of the isolated character.

If this were to be so, then numerous isolated characters, from the pens of Chekhov, Ibsen, Pinter, Beckett and Shakespeare, would have been given gibberish to speak by their authors. I had always imagined that we went to the theatre for the communicative power of the spoken word.

Yours faithfully,
SANDY CARTIER,
9 Broadway Court,
62 Overbury Avenue,
Beckenham, Kent,
April 9.

Boos at the Garden

From Mr Nicholas Albery

Sir, Re your front-page story today (later editions) about the booning of the new production of *Nabucco* at Covent Garden, I do wish the Lottery or somebody could finance an Opera Time Machine, so that the small, unrepresentative and rude clique who boo my brother Tim's innovative opera productions could watch totally traditional operas, faithfully reproducing the original production and with no references to present times.

They might even learn how to clap and cheer and be able to find some joy in their mean-spirited hearts.

Yours faithfully,
NICHOLAS ALBERY,
20 Heber Road, NW2,
April 10.

Washing of feet

From Ms Caroline Bingham

Sir, I was surprised that the Vatican has forbidden the washing of the feet of women as part of the Maundy Thursday ceremony (report, April 9) and by the statement that the ritual has been confined to men in the past.

On the contrary, it was the custom of female sovereigns to wash the feet of women. For example, the Catholic Mary Queen of Scots was accustomed to wash the feet of the number of women corresponding to the years of her own age.

In 1566 the ritual was shared by her consort, Henry, Lord Darnley. He washed the feet of thirteen "poor virgins", whose number equalled that of Christ and His disciples. So, obviously there was no question that a woman could not be considered to represent either the Lord or one of the twelve.

Yours faithfully,
CAROLINE BINGHAM,
164 Regent's Park Road, NW1,
April 5.

Knight of the road

From Mr J. Whittle

Sir, In Sir Denis Thatcher your *Steering Column* (Car 96, April 6) has found an interviewee who, when asked about points on his licence, doesn't feel obliged to indulge in adolescent macho boasting about his convictions for speeding.

Can it be that even moroling enthusiasts grow up when they reach the age of 80?

Yours faithfully,
J. WHITTLE,
185 Garstang Road,
Fulwood, Preston, Lancashire,
April 6.

Ostrich venture

From Mr Bernard N. Steven-Fountain

Sir, You report (Business, April 11) that the Department of Trade and Industry failed to act for over a year after official warnings about the Ostrich Farming Corporation. Presumably they had their heads in the sand.

Yours faithfully,
B. N. STEVEN-FOUNTAIN,
32 Westbourne Park Road,
Bournemouth, Dorset,
April 11.

Christian politics

From Mr Ian S. Blackshaw

Sir, Unlike Elizabeth Noel ("Get out of the pulpit, Mr Blair", April 9) I am delighted that one of our political leaders is apparently being guided by Christian beliefs and principles in setting his political agenda for this country.

As for saying that religion and politics do not mix, Elizabeth Noel is overlooking the fact that the Gospels are full of accounts of Jesus's ministry, championing the poor and standing up for the rights of the underprivileged and marginalised in the community. This cannot be characterised in any way as being apolitical.

A good dose of Christian morality and teaching would help, I believe, to overcome the present malaise of secularism, materialism and hedonism which is undermining, amongst other things, the family and personal relationships and thus destroying the fabric of our society.

Get back in the pulpit, Mr Blair, and continue to follow your conscience and speak out!

Yours etc,
IAN S. BLACKSHAW,
New Cottage,
The Street, Eversley, Hampshire.

From Mr Richard Warden

Sir, I suggest the reactions of Elizabeth Noel and of other Conservatives

(report and leading article, April 8; letters, April 10) are more revealing than Mr Blair's views.

Could it be that the Government would be embarrassed if Christian values were introduced into politics during the run-up to a general election? Applying these values to the Government's performance would, I believe, disclose much of the arrogance, hypocrisy and lack of justice that have ensued from many of its actions.

The consistent pattern the Government shows is the ability to implement policies that, superficially, seem acceptable; but when they go wrong ministers walk away and place the blame elsewhere. We appear to have a Government with authority but without responsibility. This abrogation opens the door for religion to enter politics.

We must lose the naive view of Christianity. Christians are not prevented from making judgments about others, neither are they quiet, pious souls who should not speak out. When Archbishop Tutu was asked why he had become so involved in politics, he replied it was because the politicians (of the ANC) were prevented from representing the black people.

In our case we have a Government that has failed to represent the majority of our people. Consequently, it should come as no shock to ministers if people are going "back to basics" and reassessing the Government, using their fundamental beliefs to decide

Royal Yacht plans

From Vice-Admiral Sir Ian McGeeoch

Sir, Fitness for purpose defines excellence in an artefact. It follows that the purpose of a successor to HM Yacht *Britannia* must be agreed before alternative designs may usefully be produced and compared.

Since even "the very act of typing the words 'Royal Yacht'" caused Libby Purves "to squirm" ("History in the making", April 9), her views on the matter may be disregarded — unless, perhaps, she could commit to paper, without undue discomfiture, the words "a vessel fit for use by the monarch, as Head of the Commonwealth, for recreation and state visits".

Yours faithfully,
IAN MCGEOCH,
Kirk Deighton House,
Kirk Deighton,
Wetherby, Yorkshire,
April 9.

From Commander Edward Young

Sir, Libby Purves's interesting article on the proposed replacement for *Britannia* rightly emphasises its most important role as a sail training ship. Can't we now drop the term "Royal Yacht", call it the Royal Sail Training Ship, and in due course launch it as *HMS Great Britain*? And would it not be a worthy candidate for a large share of its funding to be provided by the National Lottery?

Yours etc,
EDWARD YOUNG,
15 Maple Walk,
Rusington, West Sussex,
April 10.

Airline 'bumping'

From Mr Kenneth Campbell

Sir, As a retired airline employee with experience of passengers being "bumped" (letters, April 4, 6), I am surprised that in this day of constantly improving computer technology this segment of passenger service is being ignored at the expense of the people who pay for tickets. Perhaps airline computer programmers could explain why their present systems cannot protect the product.

Harvey Elliott in "The Travel Business" (April 4) gives the airline reasoning for this practice which is the easy way out for less than efficient airline management, but which must be a

Bill of Rights

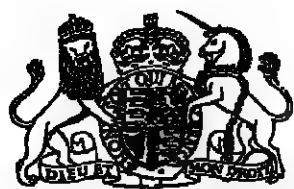
From Mr J. A. Davis

Sir, I disagree with the assertion by the Director of Charter 88 (letter, April 6) that the lack of a Bill of Rights leaves us "vulnerable to the exercise of centralised power".

Bills of Rights and written constitutions do not protect the people from government; they merely redistribute power within government. They take power from an elected parliament and

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Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046.



COURT CIRCULAR

WINDSOR CASTLE

April 11: The Duke of Edinburgh this evening attended a Reception and Dinner at the outset of an Interfaith Meeting at the Conference Centre, Chesham, Buckinghamshire. The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh were represented by Mr John Thompson (Deputy Consul-General in New York) at the Memorial Service for Miss Sharmar Douglas which was held in Saint Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue, New York, this afternoon. The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon, was represented by Dr Christopher Burdett.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

April 11: The Princess Royal, Patron, Northern Lighthouse Board, accompanied by Captain Timothy Laurence RN, today visited Alisa Craig Lighthouse on board the MV Phoenix. ST JAMES'S PALACE. April 11: The Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, this morning received the Secretary of the Duchy

of Cornwall (Mr John James).

His Royal Highness was represented by the Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery at the Service of Thanksgiving for the Life of the Hon Aylmer Tryon which was held in the Guards Chapel, Wellington Barracks, London SW1, this afternoon. KENSINGTON PALACE. April 11: The Princess of Wales this evening attended a Piano Recital in aid of the Voices Foundation at the Royal Festival Hall, London SE1. April 11: The Duke of Gloucester this afternoon opened the Swan Pool and Leisure Centre, London Road, Buckingham, and was received on arrival by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for Buckinghamshire (Commander the Lord Costello).

Afterwards His Royal Highness opened the Rival Unit at Milton Keynes General Hospital. The Duchess of Gloucester this afternoon received Commander Thomas Cunningham on assuming command of HMS Gloucester.

Today's royal engagements

The Princess Royal, as Patron of the Northern Lighthouse Board, will visit Davaar Lighthouse, Campbeltown, at 8.45 and will visit Sanda Lighthouse, Sanda, Kintyre, at 11.00.

Birthdays today

Mr Alan Ayckbourn, playwright, 57; Mr Bill Bryson, theatre director, 54; Miss Monstrer Caballe, opera singer, 63; Mr Brian Connolly, writer and broadcaster, 80; Miss Elspeth Gray (Lady Rib), actress, 67; Mr H.R. Hewitt, former chairman, Johnson Matthey, 76; The Right Rev John T. Hughes, former Bishop of the Forth, 88; Mr Uwe Kitzinger, former President, Templeton College, Oxford, 68; the Earl of Limerick, 69; Mr A.W. Mabbs, archivist, 77; Mr Bryan Magee, writer, 60; Air Marshal Sir Harold Maquire, 34; Mr J. Meade, chartered accountant, 73; Dr Hilary Nicol, educationist, 51; Mr Harold Penrose, test pilot and air historian, 92; Lady Ricketts, former chairman, National Association of Citizens' Advice Bureaux, 77; Mr George Robertson MP, 50; Mrs Wendy Savage, obstetrician and gynaecologist, 61.

Reception

British Safety Council. Mr James Tye, Director-General of the British Safety Council, was the host at a reception held yesterday at Armourers' Hall for the council's Diploma in Safety Management awards.

Anniversaries today

BIRTHS: Giuseppe Tardini, composer, 1922; John George Lambton, 1st Earl of Durham, statesman, 1802; Alexander Ostrovsky, dramatist, Moscow, 1823. DEATHS: Boris Gordinov, Tsar of Russia 1598-1605, Moscow, 1605; Charles Burney, music historian and composer, London, 1814; Fedor Chaliapin, bass singer and actor, Paris, 1938; Franklin D. Roosevelt, 32nd American President 1933-45, Warm Springs, Georgia, 1945; Antoine Pevsner, sculptor, Paris, 1962; Joe Louis, the "Brown Bomber", heavy-

weight boxing champion 1937-48, Las Vegas, 1981; Alan Stewart Paton, writer, Durban, 1988; Sugar Ray Robinson, boxer, Culver City, California, 1989. The Union Jack became England's official flag, 1606. The American Civil War began with the siege of Fort Sumter, South Carolina, 1861. Vice-President Harry S. Truman succeeded Roosevelt as American President, 1945. Yuri Gagarin of the Soviet Union made the first successful flight into space in Vostok 1, 1961.

Ruined mill loses its early claim to fame



THIS enigmatic ruin in Newport, Rhode Island, long claimed to be a remnant of the Norse colonisation of America, has turned out to be a 17th-century (Nigel Hawkes writes). It probably owes its origins not to Vinland but to Warwickshire.

The Newport Tower, seen here in a rustic painting done by Gilbert Stuart in the 1770s, has been a ruin since at least that time, and features in a romantic poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *The Skeleton in Armour*. Claims that it might be a Nordic church built in the 12th century have been countered by a simpler explanation, that it was the ruin of a mill built by Benedict Arnold, the 17th-century Governor of Rhode Island.

Now two professors, Jan Heinemeier of Aarhus University and Høge Jungner of Helsinki University, have carbon-dated the mortar in Newport Tower. Mortar consists of calcium hydroxide mixed with water and sand, which hardens by taking up carbon dioxide from the air to form calcium carbonate.

The carbon-14 content of the mortar

can thus give a measure of its age. But the method has its pitfalls, because the mortar may contain old limestone, or carbon from sand or fillers, which would give too old a date. Delayed hardening of the mortar could have the opposite effect, giving a younger age.

The two scientists believe that they have minimised the risk of both these errors, and produce a date of between 1635 and 1698. There is only one chance in 20 of the tower having been built outside this period, they report.

Archaeological work on the tower has been supported by the Committee for Research on Norse Activities in North America, which would doubtless have preferred an earlier date. But the tower is still of considerable historical interest, argues Dr Johannes Hertz, Deputy Antiquary of the Royal National Museum of Denmark.

He sees striking similarities between the arched structure of the tower and a windmill in Chesham, Warwickshire, reputedly the work of Inigo Jones. The Chesham Mill was built in 1632 on the orders of Sir Edward Peyton, and is a forerunner of the folies that landowners

later used to adorn their parks. Built of local limestone, the Chesham mill rests on six semicircular masonry arches. Though only legend links Inigo Jones to the building, it was clearly designed by an architect of quality. The diameter of the mill is 22ft 9in.

The Newport Tower, though not identical, is certainly very similar. It has eight arches instead of six, and the stonework is rougher rather than the smooth ashlar at Chesham. But the diameter, at 23ft, is almost identical, and the masonry was originally covered in smooth render to simulate ashlar.

Whether Benedict Arnold had ever seen the Chesham mill is unknown, but even if he had not it is quite possible that building workers joining the colony would have brought information about it with them.

"By constructing his mill in the same spirit Governor Arnold made a substantial contribution to the creation of a New England on foreign territory," Dr Hertz says. Undaunted, the Norse committee is continuing to search for evidence to back its claims.

Memorial service

Judicial appointments

Judge John H. Roberts to be a member of the Ethnic Minorities Advisory Committee of the Judicial Studies Board.

He succeeds Judge Nicholas Medawar, QC.

District Judges

Mr Stuart Plaskow, Mr Michael Charles Gilchrist and Mr John Austin Sparrow to be District Judges on the South Eastern Circuit.

Mr Ian Stuart Fairwood to be a District Judge on the North Eastern Circuit.

Tribunals

Mr Carol Edwina Taylor to be a full-time chairman of Industrial Tribunals from April 29. She will be assigned to the London South Region.

Mr James Aiden O'Brien Quinn to be a full-time legal member of the Immigration Appeal Tribunal.

Latest wills

Recent estates include (net before tax):

Mr Derek Roy Munnell, of Hadding, Suffolk, £1,454,354.

Mrs Mary Frances Stuart, of Chaddesley Corbett, Hereford and Worcester, £668,943.

Mrs Minnie Taskin, of London N10, £925,480.

Mrs Montgomery West, of Walton on Thames, Surrey, £242,265.

Mrs Marjorie Louise Wilkinson, of Beconsfield, Buckinghamshire, £642,551.

The Hon Aylmer Tryon

The Prince of Wales was represented by the Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery at the Service of Thanksgiving for the life of the Hon Aylmer Tryon held yesterday in the Guards Chapel, Wellington Barracks. The Rev Jonathan Gough officiated.

The Hon Charles Tryon, great nephew, and the Hon Mrs Macdonald, niece, gave readings. Lord Tryon, nephew, gave an address. Among others present were: Dreda Lady Tryon (deceased-in-law), the Hon 2nd Viscount, the Hon Edward Tryon, the Hon Victoria Tryon, the Hon 1st Viscount, the Hon 2nd Viscount, the Hon 3rd Viscount, the Hon 4th Viscount, the Hon 5th Viscount, the Hon 6th Viscount, the Hon 7th Viscount, the Hon 8th Viscount, the Hon 9th Viscount, the Hon 10th Viscount, the Hon 11th Viscount, the Hon 12th Viscount, the Hon 13th Viscount, the Hon 14th Viscount, the Hon 15th Viscount, the Hon 16th Viscount, the Hon 17th Viscount, the Hon 18th Viscount, the Hon 19th Viscount, the Hon 20th Viscount, the Hon 21st Viscount, the Hon 22nd Viscount, the Hon 23rd Viscount, the Hon 24th Viscount, the Hon 25th Viscount, the Hon 26th Viscount, the Hon 27th Viscount, the Hon 28th Viscount, the Hon 29th Viscount, the Hon 30th Viscount, the Hon 31st Viscount, the Hon 32nd Viscount, the Hon 33rd Viscount, the Hon 34th Viscount, the Hon 35th Viscount, the Hon 36th Viscount, the Hon 37th Viscount, the Hon 38th Viscount, the 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NEWS

Israeli raid may delay peace talks

At least five people were killed when Israeli helicopter gunships fired rockets into the southern suburbs of Beirut in a revenge attack against Hezbollah guerrillas, its first on the Lebanese capital for 14 years.

The attacks appear likely to delay the next stage of the Middle East peace process: agreement between Syria and Israel. The attacks may well give Damascus the excuse to delay the most difficult part of the process. Pages 1, 10

Seven-year-old pilot crashes

A seven-year-old girl who was attempting to fly across America was killed when her single-engine Cessna crashed. Jessica Dubroff died instantly when the plane hit the ground soon after it had taken off in bad weather in Cheyenne, Wyoming. Her father and an instructor also died. Page 1

Liner impounded

The Egyptian Government has impounded the Royal Viking Sun cruise liner as a bargaining counter in its dispute with Cunard over damage to a protected coral reef. Page 1

Car blacklist

Cars produced by traditional British manufacturers such as Ford and Vauxhall are rated among the worst in an authoritative survey on customer satisfaction. Page 6

Labour in centre

Labour has now become the party of the centre, speaking for the mainstream majority, Tony Blair said in America as he sought to show that his party had transformed itself and was now ready for office. Pages 1, 9

Royal separation

Marina Mowatt, daughter of Princess Alexandra and Sir Angus Ogilvy and a cousin of the Queen, has separated from her husband after six years of marriage. Pages 1, 3

Teacher plan

Labour plans to attract middle-aged businessmen into teaching were criticised by the profession for failing to tackle an impending recruitment crisis. Page 2

Cattle slaughter

Plans to kill up to 30,000 cattle a week are to be announced by the Government next week in the first stage of a rescue package for the beef industry. Page 4

Bank bomber hunt

Lists of disgruntled customers and former staff were being checked by police in the search for the Barclays bomber. Page 5

Vitamin experiment to cure crime

Young offenders are to be given vitamin pills in a pilot project aimed at changing their anti-social behaviour. More than a hundred volunteers will take part in the six-month experiment at Aylesbury young offender institution which it is hoped will show that a change of diet can improve mental attitude and reduce aggression. Page 7



Vera Hubalek, a German student, trying on a costume from *Lucrezia Borgia* at a sale by the Royal Opera House yesterday

BUSINESS

Rentokil battle: BET rejected an increased takeover attempt from Rentokil which topped its old £1.9 billion bid with a £2.1 billion offer. Page 21

Rail shares: Investors in the £1.8 billion Railtrack flotation will be entitled to discounts on their second payments if they hold on to their shares for more than a year. Page 21

House prices: A steady rise has helped lift nearly 300,000 people out of negative equity in the first three months and there are signs that the housing market is continuing to improve. Page 21

Markets: The FT-SE 100 fell 23.2 to 3744.2. Sterling fell to \$1.5137 and DM2.2735 to DM2.2719. Page 24

Rugby union: Leading clubs appealed to the Rugby Football Union president, Bill Bishop, to break the deadlock between them and the governing body. Page 40

Golf: David Gilford, of England, held an early lead in the sixtieth Masters tournament in Augusta, only to slip back when he fourputted at the 16th. Page 40

Football: Mick McCarthy, the Republic of Ireland manager, has been banned from receiving FA Cup final tickets for 10 years after two were sold for nearly six times their face value last year. Page 40

Rugby league: Mike Ford, the former Great Britain scrum half, has been left out by Warrington and the club has agreed to transfer him to Wakefield Trinity. Page 36

ARTS

Fight at the opera: Music promoter Raymond Gubbay, who staged *La Bohème* at the Albert Hall, accuses *The Times* of elitism. Milnes responds with a robust attack on Gubbay's production standards. Page 29

Menshin party: Public celebrations for Lord Menshin's eightieth birthday, later this month, have begun with a British tour by the Warsaw Sinfonia, the orchestra that he founded and conducts. Page 29

Night of Day: A new musical based on the life and music of the Fifties singer Doris Day has opened in London. Page 30

Pop on Friday: David Sinclair on Lionel Richie and Cocteau Twins; Caitlin Moran on the strange sounds of Strangelove. Page 31

Nazi hunter: Simon Wiesenthal, whose messianic mission is to ensure that no Nazi murderer will be allowed to die in peace, talks to Valerie Grove. Page 15

Pop at home: Michael Binyon describes life with a 21-year-old son en route to becoming a rock star. Page 14

Sky-high ambition: Norris McWhirter looks at the often tragic combination of pushy parents and precocious children. Page 14

The thighs have it: Why have more column inches been devoted to the Princess of Wales's cellulite than to, say, Michael Heseltine's dandruff? Page 14

EDUCATION

Richer language: Trevor McDonald, the newsreader on how, as chairman of the Better English Campaign, he will aim to improve spoken and written English among the younger generation. Page 33

A don's life: With the rapid growth in student numbers, teachers are finding that their research time is being marginalised. Page 33

THE PAPERS

Liberia's fragile peace has shattered, losing again one of Africa's most frightful conflicts and forcing an exodus of missionaries, educators and relief workers who were rebuilding the nation after its civil war. — Los Angeles Times

TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

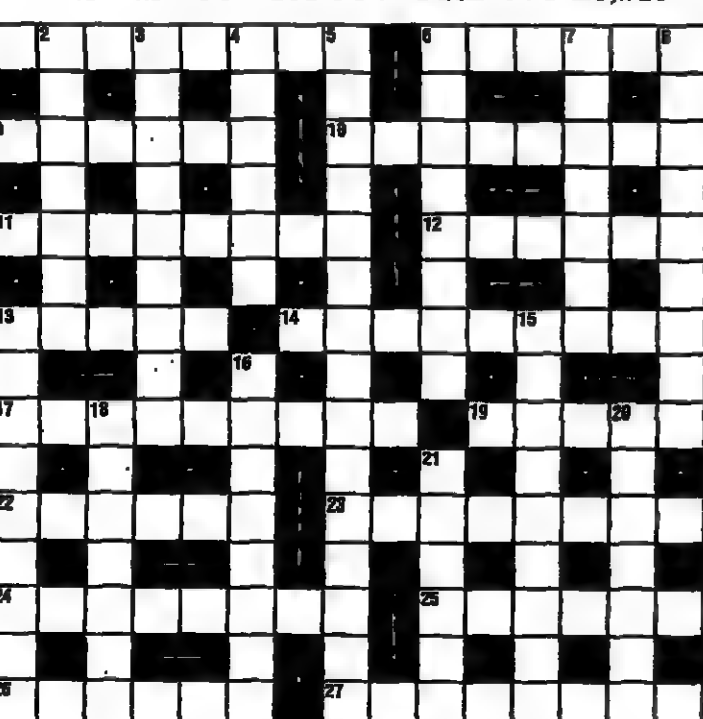
Waning stars
Kate Muir on the death of haute cuisine, and the rise of the baby bistro

LIFE WITH TONY

Part one of Anatole Kaletsky's series on how Britain would change under Labour



THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,140



- ACROSS**
- Hopeless cricket side - all out except this one (8).
 - Incentive for soldiers to get back in the wagon (6).
 - Puts up with the black pieces (6).
 - Disposal of little girl, creating lasting ill-will (8).
 - How abnormally one died within such a book! (8).
 - Light reading often required for this science subject? (6).
 - Stretch to see bird (5).
 - Copy original article about old record (9).
 - Like Coleridge's war-prophecies voices from Lancaster, possibly (9).
 - Take cocaine, or a small whisky, perhaps (5).
 - Defer case to bring in qualified doctor (6).
- DOWN**
- Demanding and getting payment (6).
 - Cos? Well, a different sort of salad dish (8).
 - Pierce female type of ant (6).
 - Rope gets a trial workout (6).
 - Desire to be making money after completion of study (8).
 - Curl looking odd on woman's dog (7).
 - Wooden steps? (4-5).
 - Record in which bad behaviour is going down (6).
 - Let car out of bag, and release animals? (4,3,4,4).
 - Pet loves to be in the light (8).
 - Take top off container and tip up for wine (7).
 - Unable to stay, moved instant (9).
 - Sort of studies taking school-children one term, almost (9).
 - Restrict movement of prison transport? (9).
 - Present permit to enter small country (8).
 - One who clumsily makes iced drink? (7).
 - Feeble analysis (3-4).
 - Every year, a chap turned up in hat (6).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,139

U N I T I A R I A N
L E V I T I C A L
P I L L A G E T O E A T
B E T W E E N
T R A D E I N C O R P O R A T I O N
S E O
T R A D E S M A N M U L C H
A B M C A A
T U R N O U T O T T O M A N
E A T I U L I A T
S I D I N G R E S P I T E
E O R S S D
P R I N C E R E G E N T

Times Two Crossword, page 40

TIMES WEATHERCALL

For the latest region by region forecast, 24 hours a day, dial 0336 401 followed by the appropriate code.

Region	Forecast
Channel Islands	701
North-South Coast	702
Central Scotland	703
West Midlands	704
East Midlands	705
North-South Coast	706
West Midlands	707
East Midlands	708
North-South Coast	709
West Midlands	710
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North-South Coast	712
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North-South Coast	733
West Midlands	734
East Midlands	735
North-South Coast	736
West Midlands	737
East Midlands	738
North-South Coast	739
West Midlands	740

AA ROADWATCH

For the latest AA traffic and road conditions, 24 hours a day, dial 0336 401 followed by the appropriate code.

Region	Forecast
Channel Islands	701
North-South Coast	702
Central Scotland	703
West Midlands	704
East Midlands	705
North-South Coast	706
West Midlands	707
East Midlands	708
North-South Coast	709
West Midlands	710
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West Midlands	731
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North-South Coast	733
West Midlands	734
East Midlands	735
North-South Coast	736
West Midlands	737
East Midlands	738
North-South Coast	739
West Midlands	740

HOURS OF DARKNESS

For the latest AA traffic and road conditions, 24 hours a day, dial 0336 401 followed by the appropriate code.

Region	Forecast
Channel Islands	701
North-South Coast	702
Central Scotland	703
West Midlands	704
East Midlands	705
North-South Coast	706
West Midlands	707
East Midlands	708
North-South Coast	709
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FORECAST

General: easternmost parts will be bright and dry, otherwise England and Wales will be cloudy and wet. East and northeast Scotland may have the odd wintry shower. Elsewhere, along with Northern Ireland, it will be wet with sleet or snow over hills.

London, SE England: patchy drizzle at first, perhaps persistent later. Wind east, moderate. Noticeably colder. Max 8C (46F).

E Anglia, E England, NE England, Borders: sunny intervals. Wind east or southeast, moderate or fresh. Feeling bitterly cold. Max 7C (45F).

Central S England, E Midlands, Channel Isles, SW England, S Wales, Isle of Man, N Ireland: mostly cloudy and wet, rain heavy at times. Wind southeast, moderate or fresh, light later. Max 10C (50F).

W Midlands, N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Central N, SW Scotland, Glasgow, Argyll: cloudy and wet, heavy rain in places. Wind southeast, becoming fresh or strong. Max 8C (46F).

Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth, NE Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: bright or sunny intervals, isolated wintry showers. Wind southeast, fresh or strong. Feeling bitterly cold. Max 6C (43F).

Central Highlands, NW Scotland: some rain or snow. Wind southeast, fresh or strong. Max 8C (46F).

Outlook: rain in the West dying out. Bright in the East. Cold.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

Region	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Rain	Max	Min
London	10	SE	100	1.0	15	5
Edinburgh	8	SE	100	1.0	12	2
Belfast	12	SE	100	1.0	18	8
Cardiff	10	SE	100	1.0	15	5
Birmingham	10	SE	100	1.0	15	5
Manchester	10	SE	100	1.0	15	5
Sheffield	10	SE	100	1.0	15	5
Nottingham	10	SE	100	1.0	15	5
Leeds	10	SE	100	1.0	15	5
Bradford	10	SE	100	1.0	15	5
York	10	SE	100	1.0	15	5
Doncaster	10	SE	100	1.0	15	5
Sheff Hallam	10	SE	100	1.0	15	5
Wakefield	10	SE	100	1.0	15	5
Halifax	10	SE	100	1.0	15	5
Leamington	10	SE	100	1.0	15	5
Coventry	10	SE	100	1.0	15	5
Norwich	10	SE	100	1.0	15	5
Exeter	10	SE	100	1.0	15	5
Bristol	10	SE	100	1.0	15	5
Cardiff	10	SE	100	1.0	15	5
Belfast	10	SE	100	1.0	15	5

ABROAD

Region	Temp	Wind	Cloud	Rain	Max	Min
Algeria	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12
Amman	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12
Baghdad	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12
Bangkok	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12
Bombay	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12
Buenos Aires	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12
Calcutta	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12
Cairo	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12
Colon	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12
Hong Kong	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12
London	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12
Manila	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12
Mexico City	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12
Moscow	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12
New Delhi	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12
Paris	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12
Rangoon	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12
Seoul	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12
Singapore	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12
Tokyo	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12
Yokohama	17	SE	100	1.0	22	12

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AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

YESTERDAY						
temp: = temp; h: = high; g: = gales; b: = rain; c: = clear; s: = sun; w: = wind; f: = fog; d: = drizzle						
region	temp	h	Rain	C	F	
London	2 1/2	11	15	59	b	r
Edinburgh	2	004	8	46	b	r
Belfast	10	001	11	52	g	u
Cardiff	0 1/2	001	11	52	g	u
Birmingham	0 1/2	001	12	54	g	u
Manchester	0 1/2	001	13	55	g	u
Sheffield	0	030	6	43	g	u
Nottingham	0	005	10	50	g	u
Leeds	2 1/2	001	15	59	c	
Bradford	2	001	16	61	g	u
York	4 1/2	007	6	43	c	
Doncaster	4	005	14	57	u	
Sheff Hallam	2 1/2	001	11	52	c	
Wakefield	2 1/2	001	13	55	c	
Halifax	4	001	13	55	c	
Leamington	4 1/2	001	13	55	c	
Coventry	2 1/2	001	10	50	c	
Norwich	4 1/2	001	10	50	c	
Sheff	3 1/2	001	10	50	c	
Wey	4	001	10	50	c	
Worcester	3 1/2	001	10	50	c	
Wolverhampton	3 1/2	001	10	50	c	
Walsley	3 1/2	001	10	50	c	
Walsingham	3 1/2	001	10	50	c	
Walsingham	3 1/2	001	10	50	c	
Walsingham	3 1/2	001	10	50	c	
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ARTS 29-31
Promoter and critic
clash in the great
Bohème debate



EDUCATION 33
Have I got news
for you, says
Trevor McDonald



SPORT 34-40
Australians trying
to set new rules
for life in London

**TELEVISION
AND
RADIO**
Pages 38, 39

THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

FRIDAY APRIL 12 1996

Debt trap eased by housing price rise

By KAREN ZAGOR
A STEADY rise in housing prices has helped to lift nearly 300,000 people out of negative equity in the first three months of this year, and there are signs that the housing market is continuing to improve, according to two reports released today.
Rob Thomas, building societies analyst at UBS Limited, said that there was a 22.7 per cent drop in households in negative equity to 964,000 in the first quarter, compared with the last quarter of 1995. This is not only the largest decline in three years, it is also the first time households in negative equity have fallen below 1 million since 1992. The number of households with insufficient equity to sell their home and buy another is still high, at 2.1 million.
Mr Thomas attributed the decline in negative equity largely to strong price gains that had benefited first-time buyers in East Anglia, the South West and Greater London, areas where the negative equity crisis was greatest.
Mr Thomas's analysis was based on figures from the Halifax Building Society's House Price Index for the first quarter of 1996. This showed a 1.2 per cent improvement, on a seasonally adjusted basis, in house prices in March. On an annual basis, prices were 1.7 per cent higher. House prices have now risen for eight months in succession.
Nine out of the 12 UK regions showed an improvement in prices in the first quarter, with the strongest gains in Northern Ireland, Greater London and Wales. In the East Midlands, however, prices fell 0.7 per cent in the three months and they also eased slightly in East Anglia. Prices in Scotland held steady.
The Halifax is still expecting a 2 per cent increase in prices for the full year, but will review its forecast if the steady improvement continues.
Pennington, page 23

BET rejects improved £2.1bn bid by Rentokil

By ERIC REGULY
BET, the business services company, yesterday rejected Rentokil's improved £2.1 billion takeover bid and predicted that it had a strong chance of thwarting the final offer.
However, institutional shareholders and City analysts said that the offer, increased from £1.9 billion, is probably sufficient to ensure success. One analyst said: "I would have thought that Rentokil has done enough to win the fight. BET has done very well to get this much out of Rentokil."
John Clark, BET's chief executive, said: "Their new bid is no knock-out punch. I think our chances are excellent and the fight has just begun. We are very confident of delivering greater value to our shareholders as an independent company."
Rentokil, which is majority-owned by Sophus Berendsen of Denmark, said the new offer valued each BET share at 217.4p against the opening offer of 190.1p. It consists of nine new Rentokil shares, £10 in cash and 80p in special dividends for every 20 BET shares. The previous offer was nine new Rentokil shares and £8 in cash. There is a cash alternative of 202.5p per share, up from 179.5p.
Clive Thompson, chief executive of Rentokil, said: "We see this as a very full offer and, if anything, erring on the generous side."
BET argued that the new offer was mean. It noted that, excluding the special dividend, which works out to a net 4p per share, the bid is worth 209.8p, or only 1.1 per cent more than the closing price of BET shares on Wednesday.
BET shares rose less than 1p to 208.4p on volume of almost 40 million shares, while Rentokil lost 13p to 350p on the

Rentokil
Management
PERFORMANCE

Clive Thompson, Rentokil's chief executive, describing the restructured bid yesterday

UBS rejects merger talks

By PATRICIA TEHAN
BANKING CORRESPONDENT
DIRECTORS of Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS) last night voted unanimously to turn down the offer of merger talks with rival CS Holding. In a two-hour meeting last night, Dr Nikolaus Senn, chairman of UBS board, told fellow directors of an approach from his opposite number at CS Holding, Rainer Gut, last week.
UBS said its board was "taken aback by CS Holding's action, the more so as the latter's chairman requested a decision in principle from UBS before the group's general meeting of shareholders on April 16, indicating that this could influence the meeting's outcome." This appears to contradict CS Holding's earlier statement denying that it planned to back Martin Ebner's BK Vision, the investment fund that is UBS's largest shareholder, which plans to oppose the nomination of Robert Studer, UBS executive, to succeed Dr Senn as chairman at the meeting.
Mr Ebner's opposition to the nomination of Mr Studer and other directors was prompted by his battle with the UBS board over the implementation of a scheme to unify the bank's share structure.
The UBS statement said: "Although a big bank merger could well bring potential benefits in some lines of business, these would far from compensate for the many negative aspects of a merger between UBS and CS Holding. It would also place a great strain on the group's financial and management resources, thereby impairing its current strength."
The UBS refusal to hold talks raises serious questions for CS Holding, parent of Credit Suisse. By going public over its wishes to hold merger talks, CS Holding has acknowledged the difficulties it faces in domestic and international investment banking.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES		
FT-SE 100	2744.2	(-23.2)
Yield	3.96%	
FT-SE All share	1865.45	(-7.80)
Nikkei	21694.43	(-97.27)
New York		
Dow Jones	5469.38	(-16.82)*
S&P Composite	629.96	(-3.54)*
US RATE		
Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
Long Bond	8 1/4%	(8 1/4%)
Yield	8.94%	(8.94%)
LONDON MONEY		
3-mth Interbank	8 1/4%	(8 1/4%)
Life long gilt	10 1/4%	(10 1/4%)
Future (Jun)		
STERLING		
New York		
\$	1.5128*	(1.5138)
London		
£	1.5131	(1.5028)
DM	2.2713	(2.2674)
FF	7.7180	(7.7080)
BP	1.8408	(1.8397)
Yen	164.10	(164.02)
£ index	83.8	(83.7)
DOLLAR		
London		
DM	1.8200*	(1.4975)
FF	5.1030*	(5.0830)
BP	1.2200*	(1.2150)
Yen	108.47*	(108.40)
£ index	95.7	(95.7)
Tokyo close Yen	108.48	
NORTH SEA OIL		
Brent 15-day (Jun)	\$20.75	(\$20.05)
GOLD		
London close	\$368.35	(\$364.85)
* denotes midday trading price		

Bank of Ireland tipped for B&W

By ROBERT MILLER
THE Bank of Ireland has emerged as clear favourite to announce a takeover of Bristol & West, the UK's ninth-largest building society, on Monday morning.
Bristol & West, which has assets of £9 billion and more than one million savers and borrowers who would be likely to receive average bonus payouts of between £750 and £1,000, yesterday declined to comment on speculation about its future.
The society announced that it was freezing new share accounts with immediate effect because of long queues of speculators at its branches hoping to cash in on takeover plans at the last minute.
Bank of Ireland has assets of nearly £20 billion and 27 branches in the UK, including ones in Cardiff, Glasgow, London, Manchester and Liverpool. The bank, Ireland's second largest, has made no

Worries depress shares

By PHILIP PANGALOS
POLITICAL worries ahead of the Staffordshire South East by-election and Wall Street's latest slide combined to depress shares in London yesterday.
Against the background of a near 200-point, three-session slide in New York, the FT-SE 100 index remained in negative territory all day. A partial recovery, after a positive start on Wall Street, was short-lived in volatile US trading. Suggestions that the US Federal Reserve was worried about inflation upset the Treasury market. The FT-SE 100 ended at 2,744.2, down 23.2 points.
A variety of bid speculation stories, hostile bid developments and broker recommendations helped Seaq volume swell to a healthy 889 million shares in after-hours trading.
Stock market, page 24

Soros gives his blessing to Blair

FROM RICHARD THOMSON IN NEW YORK
GEORGE SOROS, the powerful Wall Street investor who helped to force Britain out of the European exchange-rate mechanism, has come out in support of Tony Blair after meeting him in New York.
After a private meeting with Mr Blair, Mr Soros said that the Labour leader was "very refreshing". Praising Mr Blair's pro-European stance, he said that a Labour election victory would not "influence a scare in international investors".
Bankers and investment managers who met Mr Blair at the Wall Street offices of Barclays de Zoete Wedd said that he had presented policies that US investors in Britain would favour.
"If I were British, I would vote for him in a nanosecond," said one of those who attended a meeting with him. "He has the whole package. He is enormously intelligent and has an absolutely coherent set

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Alvis forges link to bid for 'battlefield taxi'



By ROSS TIEMAN AND PHILIP PANGALOS
ALVIS, which builds the Army's Scorpion and Stormer light tanks, has teamed up with Vickers and Thyssen-Henschel, of Germany, to bid for a £4 billion contract to build a new 'battlefield taxi' for the armies of Britain, France and Germany.
Under a deal to be announced in the next few days, Vickers would build the main production run of personnel carriers. Alvis, Britain's leading specialist in light armoured vehicles, is expected to make specialist variants for the British Army.
Nick Prest, Alvis chairman, said Alvis's share in the programme would be significant. The collaboration is part of a wide-ranging shake-up in the European armoured vehicles industry stemming from Britain's decision to make the battlefield taxi, known to the Ministry of Defence as MRAP, the first common procurement of the European Armies Agency.
GKN, which builds the Warrior personnel carrier, has teamed up with three German partners, Krauss-Maffei, MaK and Wegmann. The winner of the bid to supply some 8,000 light, wheeled personnel carriers is then expected to team with Giat, the French tank-builder.
The deal is a breakthrough for Alvis. Despite its expertise, it had failed to secure a German partner to mount an independent bid.
Stock Market, page 24

Sparkling debut for Cliveden

Cliveden, the luxury hotel operator, run at the former home of the Astor family, enjoyed a sparkling stock market debut. The shares ended their first day's trading with a 12p rise to 85p, against a 73p placing price. Volume amounted to 6.33 million shares traded. The hotel and country club business made profits of £1.86 million last year, on turnover of £6.4 million, with trading understood to be ahead this year. Cliveden, which has Viscount Astor as a non-executive director, was the home to Nancy Astor, the first woman MP and renowned hostess, from her marriage in 1905 into the Astor family.

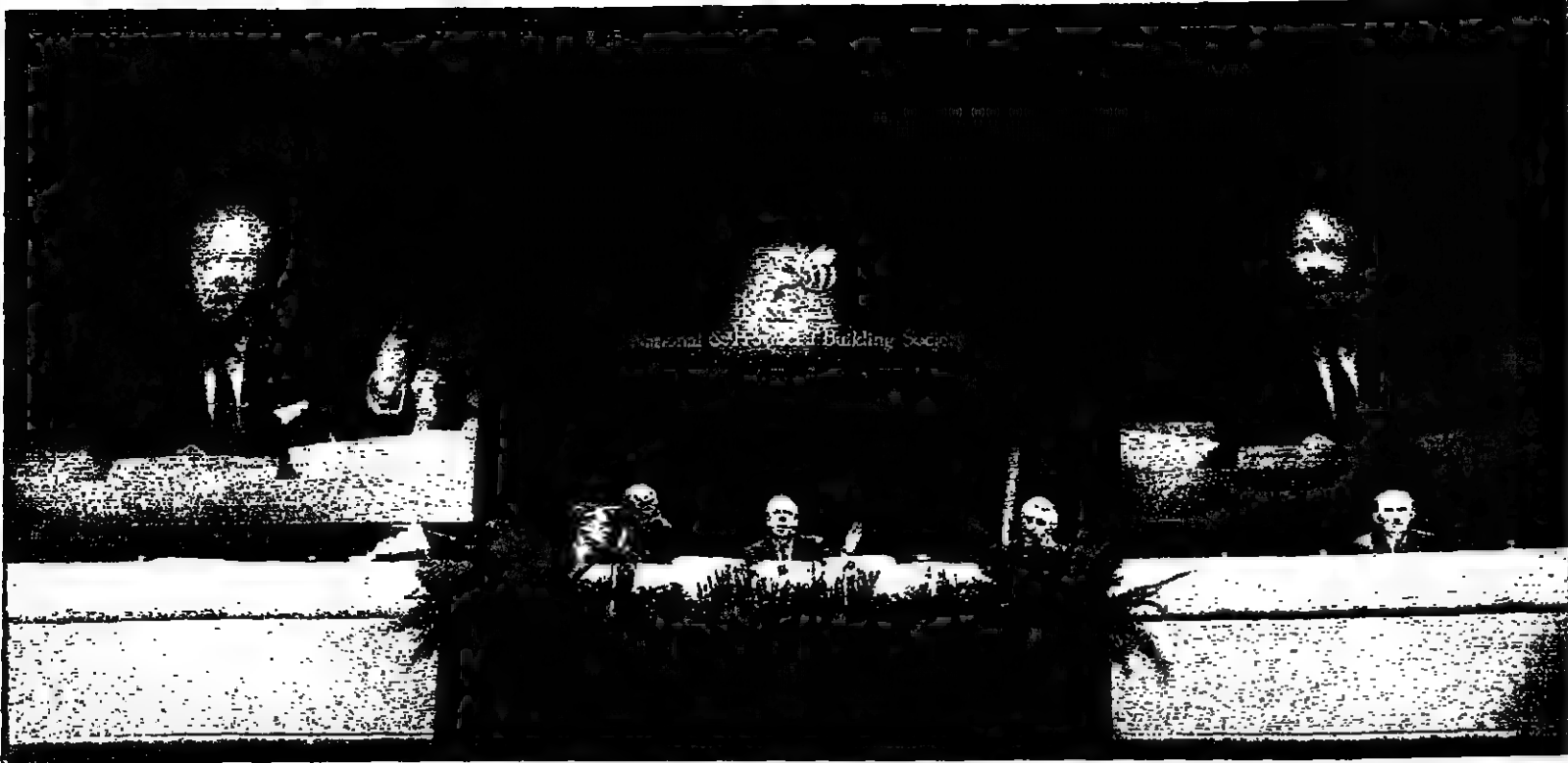
Toys range extended

Toys and Company, maker of military uniforms, insignia and other regalia, is diversifying. A new range of enamelled boxes, cufflinks and ties is being offered to menswear shops and other retailers. In the year to December 31, the company returned to profit, making £264,538 before tax on sales up £1.1 million to £9.7 million compared with a loss during 1994 of £180,744. The directors are recommending a dividend of 4p a share.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank	Bank
	Buyers	Sellers
Australia \$	2.01	1.85
Austria Sch	16.99	15.46
Belgium Fr	49.80	45.30
Canada \$	2.157	1.957
Cyprus Cyp	0.784	0.863
Denmark Kr	8.37	8.27
Finland MkP	7.96	7.01
France Fr	8.13	7.48
Germany Dm	2.42	2.21
Greece Dr	387.00	362.00
Hong Kong \$	12.33	11.33
Ireland Pt	1.02	0.94
Israel She	4.1000	4.050
Italy Lira	2481.00	2326.00
Japan Yen	178.90	166.50
Norway Kr	0.921	0.836
Netherlands Gld	2.287	2.457
New Zealand \$	2.37	2.15
Poland Zl	10.40	9.80
Portugal Esc	244.00	225.50
S Africa Rd	8.77	8.97
Spain Pta	167.00	161.00
Sweden Kr	10.80	10.00
Switzerland Fr	1.97	1.79
Taiwan Ntd	1141.16	1051.16
USA \$	1.809	1.479

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.



Society function: Lord Shuttleworth, the N&P chairman, centre, facing hostile questioning during yesterday's special meeting in Manchester

N&P members give sweeping support to Abbey takeover

By SARA MCCONNELL

THE 1.4 million qualifying members of the National & Provincial Building Society yesterday voted overwhelmingly to approve the £1.3 billion takeover by Abbey National.

Members now stand to receive average bonuses of £1,000 each. Some members with balances of £50,000 or more who are also borrowers will receive £4,750.

At a special meeting of N&P

members in Manchester, 96 per cent of savers who voted favoured the takeover. For the takeover to succeed, 75 per cent of eligible savers had to vote "yes". A majority of borrowers were also in favour.

Before the vote was announced, Lord Shuttleworth, the N&P chairman, and Alistair Lyons, chief executive, faced a hostile reception from the 400-strong audience at the Nymex Centre. Some members

attacked the N&P board for failing to achieve a better price.

One investor accused the board of "bribing members with their own money" and said a membership "swelled by carpetbaggers" had been "asked to dispose of community assets and of a valuable inheritance". He asked: "Where do we stop this disposal of our heritage?" Other members called for

details of any "golden handshakes" the board would receive from Abbey National. Lord Shuttleworth denied this would happen.

Michael Hardem, of the campaign group Members for Conversion, who has campaigned for societies to convert to banks, congratulated the N&P but then claimed members were being robbed. N&P should have held out for £2 billion. He predicted: "In a

year's time we may find we have sold out for a song."

Many members paid tribute to N&P's branch staff. Lord Shuttleworth promised there would be no compulsory redundancies but an estimated 130 branches will be closed after the takeover.

The takeover must now be approved by the Building Societies Commission at a hearing on June 3. If it is confirmed, it will go ahead on August 5 and members will receive bonus payments at the beginning of September.

Savers who have had a share account with the society for less than two years will receive £500 in Abbey National shares. To qualify they must have had a share account with a balance of more than £100 between April 28, 1995, the date the takeover was announced, and December 31, 1995, the qualifying date.

Borrowers will get a fixed distribution of £500. Savers of more than two years' standing will get a payout of £750, which they can take in Abbey shares or cash. On top of this, they will get a bonus of 7 per cent of the balance of their account. The maximum eligible balance is £50,000.

Opraf deputy tipped to take over

By JONATHAN PRYNN, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

RAIL industry insiders yesterday tipped Chris Stokes, the deputy head of the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising (Opraf), to succeed Roger Salmon, who resigned on Wednesday.

Although the Department of Transport appointed headhunters yesterday to find candidates for the £130,000-a-year job, there are expected to be few outside takers to what is being seen as a poisoned chalice.

Mr Stokes, 48, a lifelong

railwayman, has been working with Mr Salmon, who is leaving two years ahead of schedule, since the early days of Opraf and has won many plaudits for his work behind the scenes. He is seen as a safe pair of hands who has the advantage of detailed knowledge of how the highly complex franchising process work. He has also taken an increasingly public role in recent months, for example representing Opraf at the court cases that almost

scuppered privatisation before Christmas.

Roger Ford, editor of *Rail Privatisation News*, said: "He is a really good apparatchik who knows all the levers and can do the job. Chris will be good at nailing down all the details of franchising and there simply won't be time for someone new to play themselves in."

Mr Stokes joined British Rail in the late 1960s as a trainee and has since worked in a variety of jobs on the

railways, including stints at InterCity, London Midland, and Network SouthEast, where he was deputy managing director. He was the first manager at Birmingham International station.

Mr Stokes also has the presentational advantage of catching the train to work from his home in Leighton Buzzard. In contrast to Mr Salmon, who embarrassed the Government when it was revealed that he is chauffeur-driven to the office each day.

Railtrack loyalists get £120 cut

By OUR TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

INVESTORS in the £1.8 billion Railtrack flotation next month will receive discounts on their second payments of up to £120 if they retain their shares for more than a year.

City advisers to the float said yesterday that the incentive terms will give a first-year return on Railtrack shares of up to 17 per cent, against interest rates of about 4 per cent in high street building societies.

The yield on the shares, which small investors can pay for in two roughly equal instalments, is expected to be about 7 per cent. Small investors will also be entitled to an initial discount, compared with institutional shareholders, of about 3 per cent.

Investors who register with share shops before May will also be entitled to a 15p discount on their second instalments, which will must be paid next spring. The offer applies only to the first 800 shares bought. Alternatively, there is a one-for-15 bonus share offer for up to 1,200 shares held until 31 May, 1997.

Pennington, page 23

Sega moves into gaming machines

By PAUL DURMAN

SEGA, the Japanese electronic games company, is expanding its European business into the fruit machines market with the acquisition of JPM Group.

JPM, which includes JPM International and Ace Coin Equipment, says it is the UK's leading manufacturer of gaming machines. Relaxed regulations and new export opportunities have led to "rocketing" sales and profits, it said.

The price paid to Games Network, JPM's Birmingham-based owner, was not disclosed. JPM's sales in the year to September 30 were £43 million. Annual sales have risen to more than £50 million.

Although in Europe Sega is known for its home electronics games, its origins in Japan lie in coin-operated gaming machines.

Sega said the purchase of JPM fitted with its ambition to be the world's biggest company in electronic entertainment. The JPM companies will trade autonomously within Sega.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Chinese warm to Euro aerospace

THE European consortium bidding against Boeing of America to partner China and South Korea in the development of a 100-seat passenger jet has taken heart from a big improvement in relations between China and France. France and China yesterday signed an undertaking to collaborate. The Chinese noted their "hope that the Europeans will win the contract".

British Aerospace is an equal partner, with Aerospaciale of France and Alenia of Italy, in the AIR regional aircraft marketing consortium negotiating to provide technical assistance in exchange for a stake in the programme. Under AIR proposals, the Asian Express 100 would share a common cockpit with the A320 twin-jet built by the European Airbus Industrie consortium in which Bae is also a member. If AIR is chosen, China would almost certainly be invited to participate in development of a super-jumbo by Airbus Industrie.

Schneider advances

SCHNEIDER, the French electrical equipment and construction group that completed a wide-ranging restructuring effort last year, reported a sharp rise in annual earnings yesterday. The company said that net profits last year were FR£81 million, up 20.3 per cent from the previous year, while sales amounted to FR£9.4 billion, up 6.2 per cent. The revamped group is now based on two businesses: Schneider Electric (electricity distribution), and Spie-Batignolles (construction and electrical installations).

EBRD to Bulgaria

BULGARIA, eastern Europe's economic laggard, is dusting down the red carpet to welcome thousands of top bankers and politicians to a key financial gathering this weekend. The country is hosting the annual meeting of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). About 4,000 delegates from more than 50 countries will descend on Sofia for the two-day meeting of the EBRD's governors that starts on Monday. It is preceded by a weekend packed with seminars, workshops and country presentations.

Record for grain

GRAIN prices soared to all time highs yesterday on worries that dry weather may damage US harvests and an official prediction that America's stocks of wheat are set to drop lower than at any time since 1948. The Department of Agriculture projected that end-season wheat stocks would fall to 305 million bushels, down 41 million from a forecast made in March. It also expected lower maize stocks. The estimates fuelled a raging bull market that has lifted grain futures to contract and historic highs.

GPA incurs \$9m loss

GPA GROUP, the Irish aircraft leasing company, reported a net loss of \$9 million in the three months to December 31 and said it had included a \$23 million exceptional charge for the securitisation deal that last month dragged it back from the brink of collapse. In the same quarter of 1994 it lost \$11 million after exceptional costs of \$15 million. GPA, which fell heavily into debt after an over-ambitious expansion and came close to collapse, raised \$4 billion last month through a bond issue which used its aeroplanes as security.

Local link for ATT

ATT, the world's largest telecommunications group, has reached agreement with five companies, including Time Warner, to provide service to business customers in 70 cities. ATT is authorised to enter local telephone markets under terms of recent landmark legislation signed by President Clinton in February. Local networks, which had previously been reserved for regional communications companies, known as Baby Bells, represent a market with annual sales of more than \$100 billion.

Warner-Lambert hope

WARNER-LAMBERT, the US pharmaceuticals company, expects earnings from ongoing operations to rise 5 per cent in the first quarter of the current year, after reporting earnings of \$1.50 a share in the first three months last time. Melvin Goodes, chief executive, expected sales growth in "double digits" and profit growth in the "mid-teens", on average, up to 2000. Mr Goodes said Warner-Lambert had signed a letter of intent for a marketing agreement with Pfizer to co-promote its cholesterol-lowering drug Atorvastatin.

US producer prices up

AMERICAN producer prices rose by 0.5 per cent in March compared with a 0.2 per cent decline in February, the Labour Department said. But stripping out the volatile food and energy components, prices rose by only 0.1 per cent, the same as in February. Wall Street had expected overall producer prices to rise by 0.4 per cent. The Labour Department also reported that the number of Americans filing for state jobless benefits fell 59,000 to 347,000 in the latest week, a lower figure than analysts had expected.

France cuts rate

THE Bank of France cut its key intervention rate yesterday to 3.70 per cent from 3.80 per cent, the fifth cut in the rate this year. The central bank left its five-to-ten-day emergency lending rate unchanged at 5.50 per cent. The lowering of the intervention rate was too small a move to boost French shares. The CAC-40 index closed down 11.00 at 2,082.94. Lower rates were expected yesterday, given the strength of the franc against the mark which some said argued for a more aggressive rate cut.

Destiny decision, page 25

THE SUNDAY TIMES

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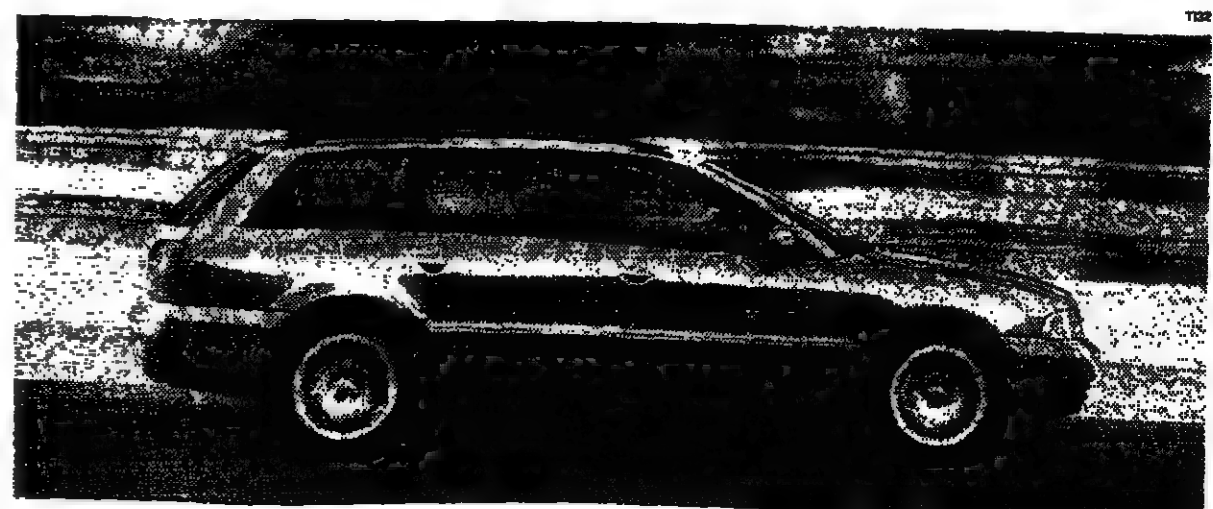


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□ Society speculators are the reluctant heroes □ Will Coleman cut the mustard? □ Cheap and dear directors

Bagging the windfalls

□ BANKING history is being rewritten. Never before, surely, have so many deposit-takers had to close their doors because to stop a run of money coming in. According to Adrian Coles, director general of the Building Societies Association "It is quite wrong for genuine customers to be inconvenienced by people seeking to make a quick buck". Sadly, the directors of most building societies seem unlikely to heed his words. They will go on trying to take their homely institutions into the corporate big-time, along with their pay. Savers, who have not done well in recent years, are now accused of being "carpet-baggers" if they spread their money around the remaining societies in the hope of earning windfalls of cash or shares to make up for the depredations of falling interest rates. But they are being sensible. It might be financial stupidity, but it would be a sensible move. Even if they guess wrong, they earn the normal return on their deposits. Indeed, these patient investors, now derided as cheap speculators, provide a vital oil to lubricate the ambitions of the boards of societies and their would-be new owners. Without them, boards might not earn the large majority votes they need under building society rules to convert or transfer. It is the

traditional saver and borrower who tends to object, only to be trampled in the dash for cash. The queues are inconvenient for small savers going about their business. And there should be some sympathy for small societies that have actually continued to try to fulfil the role of a non-profit mutual organisation. But most big societies have long abandoned such an approach in their desire for growth, maximum profit margins and a profit performance superior to their peers. Mutuality is a state of mind. If managers do not operate in that spirit, then mutuality has no value. If profits are being maximised, then members might as well lay their hands on the capital and the dividends that profit-maximising operators should pay. They are only getting cash, however, because managers found that, otherwise, they could no longer meet their ambition for mergers and growth. Building societies originally grew and prospered, however, because they could offer something better to savers than did the banks, and offered bor-

rowers a more understanding service that kept bad debts and interest rates down. Belatedly, a few of the bigger societies are returning to those roots. But it is not clear yet whether that is a change of heart or a short-term tactic to boost market share at the expense of margins while the housing market is thin. Thanks to the cash windfall, most societies will turn the way their boards want. Once the false mutuals have gone, however, the remainder will probably repeat history, offering a better deal to savers and borrowers. From a low base, they should once again outgrow their big, shiny rivals.

Sir Ralph haunts House of Fraser

□ THE strange tale of House of Fraser, the store empire that Mohamed Al Fayed sold, minus Harrods, its jewel, took another twist yesterday. Brian McGowan, chairman of the Dickens & Jones, Army & Navy and DH Evans enterprise, ushered in a new chief executive. Enter John Coleman, the former managing



director of Texas Homecare. A bit of chainsaw experience always comes in handy, although, to a casual observer, not necessarily at Dickens & Jones. A closer perusal of Mr Coleman's pedigree reveals that, prior to his two-year stint at Texas Homecare, he spent a decade at Burton Group, initially as deputy finance director and later as managing director of such outlets as Top Shop, Top Man and Dorothy Perkins.

Mr McGowan said all the things that chairman say at such times. He pointed out that Mr Coleman has an "extremely strong" track record and emphasised that he will provide the "precise blend of retail and management skills" required.

Mr Coleman spoke in a similar vein. He was "extremely pleased" to have been offered "one of the most exciting and prestigious roles" in UK retailing.

Alas, the City was not impressed. Tales had been rife that PDP, House of Fraser's largest shareholder with a 26 per cent stake, wanted a "big hitter" to join House of Fraser's board. David Dworkin, the American retail specialist who picked up £3 million from a short but successful sojourn at Storehouse, was reputed to be PDP's first choice. If not as successor to Coleman's predecessor Andrew Jennings - fired by McGowan early last month - then as successor to McGowan himself.

As House of Fraser's shares fell 14p to 175p, McGowan, defending Coleman's appointment, declared: "John had years at Burton where he was at Ralph Halpern's elbow. What better retail training could there be than that?" Sir Ralph undoubtedly possessed many skills but the City is hardly crying out for an enore of the Burton saga of the Eighties. Meanwhile,

House of Fraser's shares, 5p off their 1994 flotation price, would appear to be as overvalued now as they were then.

Can pay, will pay

□ HOW much do shareholders need to pay directors? Big investors will surely ask this more often as, one by one, the better companies convert to Greenbury rules and proudly display their directors' emoluments. Recent reports offer illuminating contrasts. At Cookson, the improving materials group, board pay totalled £5.9 million last year, not counting share options. That was 11 per cent of shareholders' dividends, which looks pricey.

Admittedly, the total was swelled by a side-effect of the Cadbury and Greenbury codes that their authors did not anticipate. Ray Sharpe, Cookson's number two in America, was paid £305,000 one-off compensation because his three-year notice period had to be cut when he joined the group board. Even so, Cookson directors are leaders in

the portly moggy stakes. Richard Oster, chief executive, got £1.7 million and most executive directors are Americans, paid on "levels prevailing in the USA".

At British Aerospace, whose operations are roughly double the size of Cookson's, and whose market value is about two thirds bigger, the board rates about £2.6 million in all. Both these boards of directors have delivered strong recoveries from financial and management crises in the early 1990s, along with share price growth above the average. In BAE's case, however, much of the hard graft was done by the late John Cahill. Cookson now has the better reputation.

At T&N, the motor components and former asbestos group, sales and profits are similar to Cookson's, but the directors are paid only £1.8 million. T&N is worth less than half as much as Cookson and its shares have performed badly. This was, however, not due to hiring cheap directors. It reflects the incidence of claims for harm from asbestos, pre-dating today's board. Ignoring asbestos charges, T&N profits have grown as strongly as Cookson's. You could say the group is harder to manage with the asbestos albatross round its neck and unpredictable cash flow. But justice and hard work never did have much to do with pay.

BP promises bigger dividends

BP EXPECTS to increase its post-tax profit by \$1.5 billion over the next five years (Carl Mortished writes). The oil company told its shareholders that earnings would grow at the rate of 8 per cent a year over the period and promised them increased dividends.

John Browne, chief executive, told the annual meeting that BP aimed to pay out half of its underlying earnings in dividends every year. Mr Browne emphasised that the targets were not based on changes in prices or margins. "We work on the basis of projects we now have. And we are also cautious about our ability to improve capital efficiency."

The company reckons that it can replace production from its existing projects over the next ten years with the rate of production increasing 4 to 5 per cent a year.

Tempus, page 23

New Amec chief looks for overseas partners

By PAUL DURMAN

THE new chief executive of Amec, the engineering and construction group that recently escaped a £360 million takeover bid from Kvaerner, wants to strengthen its international business through strategic partnerships.

Peter Mason, who joined Amec ten weeks ago, believes that the group has not made enough of its design and project management skills in international markets. He blamed this partly on weak marketing and partly on the group's operating structure, which he is subjecting to a strategic review.

Mr Mason highlighted the Amec-led joint venture to build Hong Kong's new airport terminal building as an example of projects the

group should be seeking. Amec's involvement in the £800 million contract has included Watson Steel's design of the terminal's steel roof, and the supply of all site plant and equipment.

Mr Mason envisages Amec providing the more profitable skills and technology, while its local partners supply labour and political nous.

Amec was reporting annual pre-tax profits of £15.9 million, broadly in line with the forecasts made during its defence of the bid from Kvaerner, the Norwegian ship-building to engineering group. Without bid defence costs of £4.1 million, Amec would have matched the £20 million it made in 1994.

Sir Alan Cockshaw, the

chairman of Amec, yesterday gave up his executive responsibilities. He said that underlying operating profits were up 39 per cent at £40.9 per cent. However, settling the dispute over the Tiffney North Sea oil platform cost the company £8.1 million.

Mr Mason said Amec had decided to retain Fairclough Homes, the housebuilder, because a sale would not produce a sufficiently good price at a time when the housing market was improving.

Fairclough made a £2.6 million profit after a £2.8 million loss in 1994. The construction division lifted profits from £5.7 million to £11.9 million, while the mechanical and electrical divi-

sion improved its contribution from £12.9 million to £19.5 million.

Kvaerner retains a 26 per cent stake in Amec, bought for £50 million. Erik Tonseth, Kvaerner's chief executive, said the Norwegian group would be happy to place its holding; after its acquisition of rival construction group Trafalgar House, just completed. "The Amec shares have no strategic interest for us".

Amec said the outlook for 1996 remains encouraging, and it expects much better profits this year. Analysts at Merrill Lynch are forecasting £34 million.

Amec is paying a 1.5p final dividend to make a total of 3p.

Tempus, page 23



John Coleman, House of Fraser's new head

House of Fraser shares fall as chief is chosen

HOUSE OF FRASER, the struggling department store group, has managed to fill the void left vacant by last month's sudden departure of its managing director. The Dickens & Jones and Army & Navy group has appointed John Coleman, a former Texas Homecare managing director, as chief executive (Sarah Bagnall writes).

The news received a lukewarm reception in the City, and the shares slumped 14p to 175p, below the 180p flotation price in March 1994. In recent months, the shares have risen sharply on bid speculation.

The announcement comes a week before HoF is expected to unveil a sharp drop in pre-tax profits from £28 million to £15 million in the year to January 30. The group forecast a decline in profits in January, in its fourth profit warning since flotation two years ago.

In March, Andrew Jennings resigned as managing director amid shareholder dissatisfaction over the group's performance.

Mr Coleman, 43, left Texas Homecare last year after Ladbroke sold the DIY chain to Sainsbury. He has also spent ten years with Burton Group.

Pennington, this page

ELECTRICITY NOTICE BRITISH GAS TRADING LTD SCHEDULE 2

Regulations 3(2) and 4(2)

PART 1

Form Of Application For A Private Electricity Supply Licence or Extension.

1. Full name of applicant: British Gas Trading Limited.
2. Address of the applicant or, in the case of a body corporate, the registered or principal office:
Rivermill House, 152 Grosvenor Road, London, SW1V 3JL.
3. Where the applicant is a Company, the full names of the current Directors and the Company's registered number:
Roy Alan Gardner
Michael Richard Alexander
Graham John Bartlett
Company number: 3078711
4. Where a holding of 20 per cent or more of the shares (see Note 1) of an applicant is held by a body corporate or partnership or an unincorporated association carrying on a trade or business with or without a view to profit, the name(s) and address(es) of the holder(s) of such shares shall be provided:
British Gas Trading Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of British Gas plc of the same registered office address.
5. Desired date from which licence is to take effect:
1st May 1996.
6. A sufficient description adequately specifying (see Note 2) the nature and situation of the premises intended to be supplied, separately identifying premises within the power bands specified in and to the extent provided by paragraph 7 below:
Any non-domestic premises with a maximum demand above 100kW in the authorised areas of the following Public Electricity Supply Companies: Eastern Group plc, East Midlands Electricity plc, London Electricity plc, Manweb plc, Midlands Electricity plc, Northern Electric plc, NORWEB plc, SEEBORD plc, Southern Electricity plc, South Wales Electricity plc, South West Electricity plc, Yorkshire Electricity Group plc, Scottish Power plc, and Scottish Hydro-Electric plc.
7. (a) Subject to sub-paragraph (b) indicate the total number of premises intended to be supplied in each power band as shown in the table below, together with the aggregate energy forecast to be supplied and the aggregate estimated maximum demand (see Note 3) for each power band.
(b) If the date in paragraph 5 above is on or after 1st April 1994 then only Power Band A shall be completed and if the said date is on or after 1st April 1998 then this paragraph shall cease to have effect:

Power Band	Aggregate Number of Premises	Energy Maximum demand	(GWh) to be supplied
(A) Not exceeding 0.1 MW	none	none	none
(B) Exceeding 0.1 MW but not exceeding 1.0 MW	N/A	N/A	N/A

8. A description of the system of electric lines and electrical plant by means of which the applicant intends to supply electricity, indicating which plant and lines are to be constructed and which are existing plant and lines, and further identifying any parts of that system which will not be owned or otherwise in the possession or control of the applicant.

Supplies are intended to be provided by means of the transmission systems and distribution systems owned by: The National Grid Company plc, Eastern Group plc, East Midlands Electricity plc, London Electricity plc, Manweb plc, Midlands Electricity plc, Northern Electric plc, NORWEB plc, SEEBORD plc, Southern Electricity plc, South Wales Electricity plc, South West Electricity plc, Yorkshire Electricity Group plc, Scottish Power plc, and Scottish Hydro-Electric plc. The applicant, at this moment in time, does not propose to own any electric lines - but wishes to reserve the right to do so.

9. A statement of the extent (if any) to which the applicant considers it necessary for powers under Schedule 3 (compulsory acquisition of land etc.) and under Schedule 4 (other powers etc.) to the Act to be given through the licence for which he is applying:

To be able to facilitate the supply of electricity to the customer types outlined in Paragraph 6 the applicant considers it necessary for powers under Schedule 3 (compulsory acquisition of land etc.) and under Schedule 4 (other powers etc.) to the Act to be given through the licence.

10. Details of any licences held, applied for or being applied for by the applicant in respect of the generation, transmission or supply of electricity:

None.

Note 1

Reference to shares:

- (a) in relation to an applicant with a share capital are allotted shares;
- (b) in relation to an applicant with capital but no share capital, are to rights to share in the capital of the applicant;
- (c) in relation to an applicant without capital, are to interest:
(i) conferring any right to share in the profits or liability to contribute to the losses of the applicant; or
(ii) giving rise to an obligation to contribute to the debts or expenses of the applicant in the event of a winding up.

Note 2

The description should enable the areas, location or premises concerned to be adequately and readily identified, by map if the applicant so desires or by any other convenient means. The following examples of descriptions that might be used are not exhaustive and are by way of illustration only: the area or premises might be identified by the name of the customers and/or postal address of the premises to be supplied; described by reference to a named street or road, town, city, village, parish, county or other accepted boundary, such as a Local Authority Area; or described by reference to certain other characteristics such as the type of premises or the maximum electrical demand to be met at those premises.

Note 3

- (a) For premises already receiving electricity for a period in excess of 12 months, whether from the applicant or anyone else, maximum demand shall be calculated as the average of the three highest monthly maximum demands in the preceding 12 months; or

- (b) For premises not already receiving electricity, maximum demand shall be calculated as the average of the three highest monthly maximum demands which might reasonably be expected by the applicant to be supplied in the first 12 months of supply.

In compliance with the Electricity (Applications for Licences and Extensions of Licences) Regulations 1990, maps relevant to the above application are lodged with the regional offices of the Office of Electricity Regulation and are available for inspection by the public between 10:00 and 16:00 on any working day.

Montigny, 12 April 1996

ANNOUNCEMENT

Rather than let rumours develop regarding the offers made to the Société Civile des Salariés (SCS) regarding the purchase of its shareholding in Financière Eurest, Sodexho clarifies its position as follows:

1
The management buy-out of EUREST France that was put in place in 1991 has been supported by SODEXHO SA, holding 33.34% of the share capital of Financière Eurest; Wagons-Lits, holding 33.3% of the shares; the management and associates owning 33.2% of the shares (but 57.88% of the voting rights); and by the venture capital fund, Epargne Développement, with 0.16% of the equity.

2
SODEXHO contested the sale in 1995 by Wagons-Lits to Compass of its 33.3% of the capital in Financière Eurest, notably in the context of the agreements made at the time of the management buy-out in 1991. SODEXHO has recently taken legal action against Compagnie Internationale des Wagons-Lits in this respect. As a result, SODEXHO considers that the Board of Financière Eurest must reject in accordance with statutory authorisation procedures the offer made by Compass to purchase SCS's shareholding in Financière Eurest.

3
More than 5 years ago, SODEXHO decided not to make any alliance without the full support of its partner's existing management. Hence, over the last 9 months, SODEXHO management has held discussions with SCS management and together they have developed a solution which guarantees management independence and autonomy for the EUREST France business, thereby ensuring the perfect continuity of the current situation.

4
SODEXHO has offered a consideration of up to FF 694 million for the SCS's shareholding, dependant upon the future performance of EUREST France, but subject to a minimum payment of FF 592 million. This consideration is interest bearing at the average monthly money market rate (T4M) with effect from 1 April 1996.

5
SODEXHO has also provided to the SCS a bank guarantee of FF 694 million (value date 1 April 1996) as surety of its intent to purchase in due course the SCS's interest in Financière Eurest. The SCS has made it known that certain of its own shareholders (both Eurest France managers and others) wish to sell their stakes immediately; to this end SODEXHO is ready to make an advance to the SCS on the consideration payable in due course for the acquisition of the latter's shareholding in Financière Eurest.

For further information, please contact:
Clodine PINCEMIN
Corporate Vice-President, Communications
Tel: (33.1) 30 85 72 14

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COMPANIES

PHILIP FANGALOS

Dairy sector nervous as slaughter decision nears

"MAD COW" disease continues to haunt food manufacturing stocks, with a number of shares in the spotlight yesterday after Credit Lyonnais Laing issued a detailed study on BSE.

In a note called BSE: The enemy within, CLL suggests that the Government has until the end of this month to conceive a slaughter programme of BSE-infected herds. CLL points out that the lifting of the export ban on UK beef and beef derived products is wholly contingent upon EU approval of this slaughter programme.

CLL says that Northern, Unigate and Dalgety have the most significant exposure to a slaughter programme, with a prediction, based on profits and earnings downgrades of about 10 per cent.

On a worst-case scenario, the earnings risk for dairy stocks could be 20 per cent, with dividend growth constrained.

CLL remains cautious on Unigate, down 4 1/2p at 40p, and Northern, 2p easier at 175p, and advises switching out of Dalgety, down 6p at 40p, and into Hillsdown, 1 1/2p stronger at 177p.

Traders elsewhere in the market remained cautious, but calm, against the background of a near-200 point three-session slide in New York and concern over the Government's dwindling majority. Another big overnight fall on Wall Street, where the Dow Jones average tumbled 74 points, saw shares in London start lower.

There was a partial recovery after a positive start on Wall Street on firmer bonds, futures and better-than-expected March producer price data in the US. However, Wall Street resumed its volatile pattern and this combined with bond market weakness to depress sentiment in London.

The FT-SE 100 index ended 23 1/2 points lower at 3,744.2. Volume reached 840 million shares, boosted by trading of 82 million shares in Memmore Abbey, the former Platinium, which returned from suspension at 8p.

There was hectic activity in the London International Financial and Futures Exchange (Liffe) after the launch of a Euroyen Futures contract, linking up with the Tokyo International Financial Futures Exchange (Tiffe). Tiffe's



Hectic trading on Liffe as Euroyen futures were traded for the first time yesterday, linking up with Tokyo

Euroyen contract is the world's second largest money market futures contract.

The battle for control of BET, the business services group, hotted up after Renokil, the environmental and industrial services group, upped the terms of its hostile bid, as expected, by £300 million to £2.1 billion. BET swiftly rejected the increased

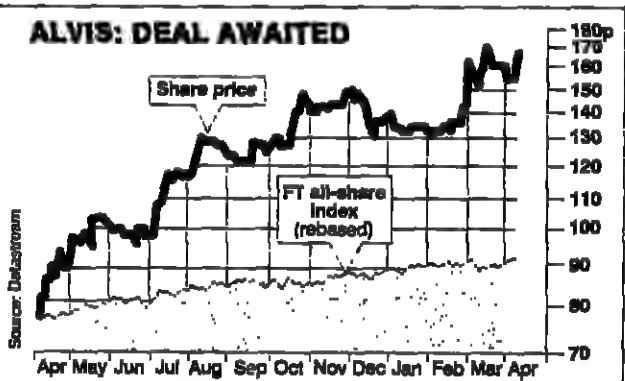
dividends for every 20 BET shares. Renokil's revised offer values each BET share at 215.5p, with an improved cash alternative worth 202.5p (179.5p previously).

Internationally-traded pharmaceuticals saw selling, with SmithKline Beecham down 26p at 655p. Zeneca 27p to £13.74 and Glaxo Wellcome off 10p to 788p. However, RTZ

Cable and Wireless, the telecoms group whose financial advisers are working on merger proposals with BT's advisers, recovered from an 8p deficit to end the day 3p lower at 526p. The recovery was prompted by substantial activity in the options pit, with reports of hectic trading in C&W's call options. BT lost 6p to 370p.

offer, although many analysts think that the improved offer is likely to win the day. BET rose 3p to 208 1/2p, on heavy turnover of 38.3 million shares as institutions sold in the market following the increased bid terms from Renokil, down 13p to 350p. The increased offer involves nine new Renokil shares, £10 in cash and 80p in 227p.

added 17p to 978p after brokers tipped the gold price to surge. Housebuilders continued to attract strong support after the recent mortgage cuts, and a positive review of the sector from SBC Warburg. Barrat climbed 11p to 262p. Redrow 3p to 138p, Tay Homes 7p to 139p, Persimmon 7p to 227p, Wilson Bowden 12p to 433p.



Rugby 7p to 126p. Blue Circle 9p to 364p. BPB 10p to 336p. Marley 8p to 237p, and Wolseley, 6p to 46p.

Matthew Clark formed 6 1/2p to 744p, boosted by a Credit Lyonnais Laing buy recommendation.

Credit Lyonnais Laing also recommended a switch out of Scottish Hydro, down 4 1/2p to 327 1/2p, and into Scottish Power, 4p lower at 349p.

Alvis, the defence equipment maker that specialises in light armoured vehicles, eased 1p to 167p, with a substantial Vickers deal understood to be in the pipeline.

News that John Coleman, a former managing director of Texas Homecare, has been appointed as the new chief executive of House of Fraser failed to help the department stores group.

The shares slid 14p to 175p as the market had been hoping for someone with a higher profile.

Friendly Hotels was unchanged at 145p after a buy note from Panmure Gordon. Panmure has also reiterated its buy stance on British Aerospace, up 4p to 857p.

Pannure says that BAE is still too cheap given the visibility of its order book, which with Eufighter will stretch well past 2005, its prospects of significant further defence contracts, and its exposure to the fast-improving civil aerospace market. Panmure has a target price of £10.

Manchester United, which is still on course for an FA Cup and Premiership double, added another 22p to 346p.

Cliveden, the luxury hotel operator, made a sparkling debut with a 12p rise to 85p, against a 73p placing price. GILF-EDGED: The market opened lower after weaker overnight US Treasuries and lower Bunds. There was a partial recovery on the release of the latest US economic data, but the market failed to hold on to the higher levels and ended near the day's lows.

The June long gilt future lost 23 ticks to £104 1/2, on volume of 51,000 contracts traded. Among conventional stocks, longer-dated issues fared worse, with losses extending to 4 1/2p, while shorts and index-linked stocks fell by about 1 1/2p. NEW YORK: Concern about inflation took prices on Wall Street lower and by midday the Dow Jones industrial average was 16.62 points down at 5,469.36.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday)	Dow Jones	5469.36 (-16.62)
S&P Composite		629.90 (-1.54)
Tokyo:	Nikkei Average	21694.43 (-47.27)
Hong Kong:	Hang Seng	10892.57 (-184.88)
Amsterdam:	EOT Index	543.26 (-1.51)
Sydney:	AD	3224.6 (-0.14)
Frankfurt:	DAX	2509.71 (-20.31)
Singapore:	Smalls	2384.75 (-5.23)
Brussels:	General	8915.69 (-11.71)
Paris:	CAC-40	3072.52 (-21.42)
Zurich:	SWX Gen	765.80 (-5.50)
London:	FTSE 100	3744.2 (-23.5)
	FTSE 250	4390.5 (-3.4)
	FTSE 1000	1887.4 (-4.7)
	FTSE Europe 100	1400.25 (-2.58)
	FT All-Share	1506.45 (-2.80)
	FT Non Financials	1902.57 (-2.70)
	FT Financials	111.71 (-0.16)
	FT 100	92.04 (-0.44)
	SEAG Volume	89.1m
	USM (Daxsmith)	209.7 (-0.45)
	USM (Daxsmith)	1.52 (-0.01)
	German Mark	2.2719 (-0.0016)
	Exchange Index	83.6 (-0.1)
	Bank of England official base rate	1.25%
	ESPR	1.00%
	RPI	150.9 Feb (2.7%) Jan 1997=100
	RPI	180.2 Feb (2.9%) Jan 1997=100

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MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:	
Micro Focus	883p (-120p)
Mitel	432p (-21p)
Broken Hill	975p (-26p)
FALLS:	
House of Fraser	175p (-14p)
Smithkline	655p (-28p)
Caltech	501p (-13p)

Closing Prices Page 27

TEMPUS

Rien ne va plus

RENTOKIL's gamble might just pay off. Within a month, and for a mere 10 per cent uplift on its initial £1.9 billion bid, the rodent killing and plant watering company will merge with BET's towel cleaners and personnel trainers, barring a rival bid.

BET shareholders were not bowled over by Rentokil's offer, it is less than generous. Instead, they are buying into Clive Thompson's track record. For as long as anyone can remember, he has grown Rentokil's profits by 20 per cent a year, and with BET at its side, he claims the same rate can be maintained ad infinitum. Rodents beware.

His confidence stems from his belief — reinforced by constant repetition — that BET is a "good business, badly managed". The implication is that Rentokil will be able to raise BET's profit margins rapidly to the

bidder's 20 to 30 per cent level. Cost cutting will permit some easy early gains as BET's senior management is culled but the rest is senior to question. BET presents Rentokil with different businesses that may not respond to bright uniforms and a new cheerleader.

It is hard to imagine, for example, how Rentokil will raise the profit margins on BET's electronic security business from their unusually high current level of 17.5 per cent. Electronic security is a more complex business than office cleaning. Even with the forced optimism of a bid target, BET's long-term margin goal for electronic security is only 15 per cent.

If Clive Thompson succeeds in raising BET's returns to Rentokil levels, his achievement will be justly praised but investors should not be surprised if he falls short.

Amec

FOUR months after a messy escape from Kvaerner's takeover bid, AMEC is at a crossroads. With a new chief executive on board it has another chance to produce some good results.

They are long overdue. AMEC's shares have doubled in value since October, but over the last five years have underperformed the

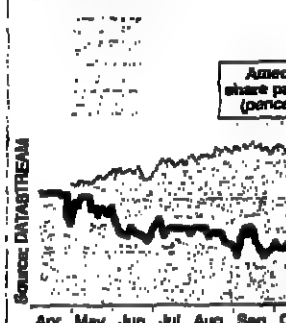
Amec's focus on higher margin design and build and project management business makes sense as is the intention to make more use of the group's skills in overseas markets through strategic partnerships.

AMEC is also asking its shareholders for powers to deal with its disproportionately large and expensive

(£11.6 million a year) preference shares. Redemption could reap significant benefits for equity investors.

The shares are up 25 per cent since the Kvaerner bid failed. But with some of AMEC's biggest problems behind it, and encouraging signs in some of its markets, they could still be worth a gamble.

ROLLING STOCK



Lonrho

THE long arm of the European Competition Commission now appears to extend to Johannesburg, with rumours that he is about to stop Lonrho from snuggling up to Gencor in the platinum market. Why European bureaucrats should be able to prevent a merger of mining interests in Africa is an interesting question. How they could prevent it is an even bigger puzzle.

Platinum is important because it is used to make catalytic converters for automobiles and, therefore, European car manufacturers have a vested interest in keeping the price low. Most of the shiny metal comes from South Africa, where three companies, Rusenberg, part of the Anglo American conglomerate, Lonrho and Gencor dominate the market. Lonrho and Gencor are merging their respective interests into Impala Platinum, which will produce about a

third of the world supply of the metal.

Meanwhile, Anglo American is complicating the picture by building a stake in Lonrho with clear designs on Lonrho's mining interests including Ashanti, the successful Ghanaian gold mining associate.

Anglo is the logical buyer of the demerged Lonrho mining interest but would have little desire to inherit an association with Gencor. Anglo, therefore, may have every reason to see the Impala venture succeed.

Ironically, the platinum price has been weak of late for different reasons. The Russians are exporting large stockpiles in search of hard currency but their actual production of the metal is thought to be half of capacity. If that is the case, Europeans have not much reason to fear a South African cartel.

BP

The decision to reduce the cover on the BP dividend is the final chapter in the oil

company's spectacular recovery. Having restored profitability levels, the company now feels confident enough to pay out half its earnings and it is also giving a signal that there is more growth to come in the bottom line.

Market forecasts of the 1997 payout based on the new rate put the shares on a premium yield, more than justifying the recent advance in the share price.

However, investors should wait before buying. A buoyant short-term oil price caused by low inventories and production shutdowns in the North Sea, has kept the oil sector bubbling. Looking further out, the oil price dips sharply due to fears of Iraqi exports hitting the market late in the summer.

BP's production portfolio should keep its top line growing nicely over the next three years but along with the rest of the sector, the shares could dip in the next few months.

EDITED BY CARL MORTSHED

COMMODITIES

(LONDON COMMODITY EXCHANGE)

Commodity	Price	Change
May 1996	108.98	+0.18
May 1997	109.18	+0.20
May 1998	109.38	+0.20
May 1999	109.58	+0.20
May 2000	109.78	+0.20
May 2001	109.98	+0.20
May 2002	110.18	+0.20
May 2003	110.38	+0.20
May 2004	110.58	+0.20
May 2005	110.78	+0.20
May 2006	110.98	+0.20
May 2007	111.18	+0.20
May 2008	111.38	+0.20
May 2009	111.58	+0.20
May 2010	111.78	+0.20
May 2011	111.98	+0.20
May 2012	112.18	+0.20
May 2013	112.38	+0.20
May 2014	112.58	+0.20
May 2015	112.78	+0.20
May 2016	112.98	+0.20
May 2017	113.18	+0.20
May 2018	113.38	+0.20
May 2019	113.58	+0.20
May 2020	113.78	+0.20
May 2021	113.98	+0.20
May 2022	114.18	+0.20
May 2023	114.38	+0.20
May 2024	114.58	+0.20
May 2025	114.78	+0.20
May 2026	114.98	+0.20
May 2027	115.18	+0.20
May 2028	115.38	+0.20
May 2029	115.58	+0.20
May 2030	115.78	+0.20

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GNL LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

(LONDON COMMODITY EXCHANGE)

Commodity	Price	Change
May 1996	113.00	+0.10
May 1997	113.10	+0.10
May 1998	113.20	+0.10
May 1999	113.30	+0.10
May 2000	113.40	+0.10
May 2001	113.50	+0.10
May 2002	113.60	+0.10
May 2003	113.70	+0.10
May 2004	113.80	+0.10
May 2005	113.90	+0.10
May 2006	114.00	+0.10
May 2007	114.10	+0.10
May 2008	114.20	+0.10
May 2009	114.30	+0.10
May 2010	114.40	+0.10
May 2011	114.50	+0.10
May 2012	114.60	+0.10
May 2013	114.70	+0.10
May 2014	114.80	+0.10
May 2015	114.90	+0.10
May 2016	115.00	+0.10
May 2017	115.10	+0.10
May 2018	115.20	+0.10
May 2019	115.30	+0.10
May 2020	115.40	+0.10
May 2021	115.50	+0.10
May 2022	115.60	+0.10
May 2023	115.70	+0.10
May 2024	115.80	+0.10
May 2025	115.90	+0.10
May 2026	116.00	+0.10
May 2027	116.10	+0.10
May 2028	116.20	+0.10
May 2029	116.30	+0.10
May 2030	116.40	+0.10

Volume 1000

Volume 1000

THE TIMES
CITY DIARY

Arresting sight for Sir Robin

NAKED shareholders paraded themselves in front of Sir Robin Ibbotson and at the first Lloyds TSB annual meeting yesterday, protesting at the bank's stance on Third World debt.

At least two arrests were made after the "ethical streak" and several protesters were ejected from the meeting held at Edinburgh's new international conference centre.

The 30 protesters belonged to the Lloyds and Midland Boycott (LAMB), the same gang that tied itself to the railings at Lloyds' annual meeting last year. "We've tried polite questions at previous meetings but it doesn't work," panted one protester. Spurred Sir Robin says LAMB is ignoring his invitations to talk.

PETER MASON'S first two months as chief executive of the construction group Amec have done wonders for his frequent-flyer miles. He has spent 80 hours in the air, flown 30,000 miles, and seen Singapore in 24 hours while visiting group operations around the world.

Where's Peter?

THE picturesque home of Peter Middleton on the edge of the North Yorkshire Moors is the cause of much concern among locals. The former Lloyds' chief executive, who quit in a hurry six months ago to become a £1 million-a-year executive at Salomon Brothers, has not been seen at his cottage for months. The 56-year-old former monk was last spotted with Lucy Roberts, his girlfriend, fixing up Old School House, which nestles next to the ancient church of St Chad's. Locals are keeping vigil on his Honda 250cc motorbike, which was left outside in the winter.



Real-time love

CITY whizz-kids across the UK are making room in their diaries for a date with Julia Carling. Extolling the virtues of Cityscreen, the real-time magazine, at a presentation to marketers last night, the loveless blonde made a desperate plea to brokers and traders. "Who reads Cityscreen?" posed Will Carling's former love. "Young, wealthy, single males. Sounds interesting... maybe a potential date for my diary."

Heep of trouble

ANOTHER apparent blow to the US tobacco industry has come after an ex-lover seems to have handed over wads of documents concerning Philip Morris. Hasty Heep, an interior decorator, kept the documents in her basement on behalf of her former fiancé, a Philip Morris researcher. When the relationship turned sour, Ms Heep sought revenge, to the delight of lawyers hostile to Philip Morris.

SLOUGH ESTATES, the property group, is handing out ghoulish invitations to the demolition of a disused bus maintenance garage in Elstree today. The million square foot building adjacent to the M1, which was originally intended to be the final extension of the Northern Line, is to be turned into a business park.

'Ins' and 'outs' will decide destiny of monetary union

George Brock charts shifts in the nature of the debate over the euro



Key figures: Theo Waigel, German finance minister, and Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor

THE Chancellor of the Exchequer flies into the stone-walled city of Verona today for what is billed as, at best, a bruising encounter and at worst an ambush. Yet it is a fair bet that Kenneth Clarke will be his usual insouciant self when he touches down.

His unconcern will not only reflect his renowned and jovial indifference to any claim that crisis is coming from whatever quarter. Mr Clarke is not only congenitally immune to crisis fever, but knows that he holds enough cards to prevent Britain being forced to join a revamped exchange-rate mechanism any time soon. And he arrives in Verona with the Cabinet rumpus over a referendum on monetary union behind him.

Most importantly, Europe's debate about the single currency has shifted since the beginning of this year and will go on doing so for another two years. Businessmen may urge politicians to clarify unresolved questions about how a monetary union might work, but neither the EU nor Chancellor Helmut Kohl works that way. Herr Kohl, who remains the master of the single currency game, is happy to wait for the debaters to exhaust themselves. He discreetly discourages frontal opposition to monetary union inside the German political establishment but says little in public, influencing events from the sidelines.

Last autumn, public and private speculation that the start of the single currency would have to be delayed beyond January 1999 gained ground. Delay seemed the only solution if France's high public deficit blocked its entry to the single currency.

But in the new year the climate changed. Germany's finance minister, Theo Waigel, revealed that his own country's public debt fell well outside of the 3 per cent (of GDP) required by the Maastricht treaty. Although Herr Waigel promised that Germany's 3.6 per cent would be brought into line by the end of 1997, markets began to suppose that both Germany and France might have to bend the rules to join each other in the euro-zone. The Maastricht treaty has always allowed governments to fudge the debt rules, but only recently have German politicians begun to draw attention to the fact. "All texts are open to interpretation, and Maastricht is no exception," Karl Lamers, the influential Christian Democrat, said two months ago.

With jobs leaking out of the German economy at an alarming rate, German industrialists piled on pressure for a lower mark. After a pivotal meeting in Munich in January with the increasingly ambitious and powerful Herr Waigel, Herr Kohl began, gently, to try to talk the mark down (see chart). So far, and assisted by a strengthening dollar, the tactic has worked.

Moreover, market pundits are starting to sound more

optimistic about monetary union in spite of weak growth in the key economies. President Jacques Chirac of France has not wobbled: Herr Kohl and foremost an act of political will. Michele Debonneville, chief economist at Banque Indosuez, said this week. That bank's own research suggests that France's debt-to-GDP percentage will be 3.7 in 1997 and Germany's 3.2. The market currently believes that in the spring of 1998, EU leaders will not let such numbers stand in their way. Last month's regional elections in Germany confirmed that Herr Kohl will still be around to lead the leaders.

So far as persuading the markets goes, Herr Kohl's project of economic and monetary unification stands in much better shape than six months ago. The problem with this rosy scenario lies in persuading the voters.

Confident as they may claim to be about the single currency's take-off, Herr Kohl and his ministers possessed an expensive propaganda campaign for the euro in January because important local elections were in the offing. Between 50 and 60 per cent of Germans remain opposed to

the euro and polls find opponents also outnumbering enthusiasts in Britain, Austria, Sweden, Finland and Denmark. The euro quite simply lacks legitimacy.

To succeed, Herr Kohl and President Chirac have to jump at least four obstacles:

First, finding a big enough "core" of states both wanting the euro and with deficits low enough to pass muster. Deficit ratios below 4 per cent seem to be acceptable to governments — although fudging on that scale may well scare German voters who go to the polls in a general election in 1998. But "manageable" overshoots are by no means guaranteed. British Treasury forecasts suggest that the French deficit ratio may be above 4 per cent at the end of 1997. The annual report of the European Monetary Institute, due in November, will be the key indicator of whether enough countries can come close enough.

Secondly, quelling French doubts about EMU and jobs. French public opinion remains roughly 2:1 in favour of the single currency. President Chirac, who is not even committed to such a thing, would have little to fear from an EMU

referendum if he held one now. The President's problem is his own credibility gap: he keeps making precise pledges about the jobs France will create and nobody believes he can deliver. Not all his welfare cuts have yet bitten and fresh opposition is still appearing. France's doctors have called a strike for later this month. Over the summer, the Government will have to draft a budget for 1997, which will have to be even more austere — the last one brought the country to a halt just before Christmas.

Thirdly, quelling German doubts. Herr Kohl will probably try to brush aside economic fears and tell his voters that they should swap the mark for the euro to prove that Germans remain good Europeans. But the Chancellor has also adopted a new strategy of softening the EMU criteria and the mark. As an influential member of the Bundesbank council pointed out privately last month, that implies a monetary union which does not make price stability its priority. The Maastricht treaty says that price stability must be the European Central Bank's (ECB) key target.

Fourthly, avoiding an EU split. In spite of dire predictions here that Mr Clarke will be faced with demands that he join a new ERM "or else", neither Germany nor France is yet determined to create a single currency at the price of permanently dividing the EU. No one has yet succeeded in designing a convincing, compulsory and inclusive system for preventing currencies outside the single currency from diverging too far from the euro. British ministers may have a high profile in the arguments, but fears that "our" countries will devalue against the euro are essentially — for France and Germany — the fear of Spanish or Italian devaluation. The sanctions

against devaluers being demanded by some French industrialists would spell the destruction of the single European market and perhaps of the Union itself. Global markets would react accordingly.

Hans Tietmeyer's suggestion yesterday that the head of a future ECB be encouraged to "persuade" weakening currencies to manage devaluation promptly may be economically logical but could only increase political tensions between "ins" and "outs". Dr Tietmeyer, the most likely candidate to head the ECB, cannot seriously believe that devaluation guidance from what would be one of the most powerful and least accountable central banks will be acceptable in Britain, Spain, Portugal or Ireland.

Great as these problems are, continental political classes and financial markets still feel that fear of chaos, which would be triggered by any hesitation over monetary union, will outweigh the doubts. Attention is shifting again, this time towards how a monetary union will work once established.

German bankers have been ready to contemplate easing entry criteria for borderline states on the understanding that economies with a record of misbehaviour will not be allowed to reoffend. But discussions over Herr Waigel's "stability pact" have all but emptied his scheme of meaning. Few governments are willing to support automatic penalties — Herr Waigel suggested hefty fines — for running deficits. The effect of this rejection inside Germany has yet to be seen.

None of the increasingly elaborate preparations for the launch of the euro have answered the question about whether the new money will divide or unite the existing EU. Monetary union remains at heart a political device to reinforce the link between France and Germany. But if a Franco-German-Benelux currency is launched in a way that makes clear that Spain, Italy and eastern Europe cannot join for a long time, the EU will be transformed into something far more rigidly divided than the querulous, higgledy-piggledy collective of today.

The City of London and British business will come under pressure to persuade Britons to rethink their reluctance to join: German officials are tinkering with schemes to prevent London dominating the bond market in the new currency. But British opposition to the euro is not the central difficulty with which EMU's architects must wrestle. In the question of the "ins" and the "outs" lurks the issue of the EU's whole future.

Inscrutable origin of riches from China

Tom Walker in Hong Kong on banks' fears of becoming tainted

HONG KONG'S close-knit fraternity of private bankers have given themselves a clean bill of health, in spite of questions raised by the head of Coutts, the Queen's bank, about the legitimacy of some of the "new money" coming from China into the territory.

David Went, chief executive of Coutts Group, raised hackles when he admitted that his bank was being circumspect in its treatment of the vast fortunes being made in the People's Republic of China.

"In a country where private wealth has not been legal, you have to ask yourself where it is coming from," he said. "We have a reputational risk in taking on clients from the PRC and we would be cautious in accepting clients."

Hong Kong, one of the world's great banking centres for Asian entrepreneurs and families wishing to park substantial assets offshore, has maintained its high standing over the past decade in the face of an increasingly murky international picture of offshore banking.

The whereabouts of Latin America's drug fortunes has always worried the international monetary watchdogs, and the collapse of the former Soviet Union into gangsterism has added to their troubles. Asian wealth, meanwhile, has been allowed to pile up largely unchecked.

Hong Kong has serviced the bulk of China's money for over a century, and almost exclusively since the communists took power.

Much of the money made in Hong Kong is based on uninterrupted appreciation in its property market. However, with integration into China looming, the basis of wealth on display today is becoming less tangible. Smuggling, of anything from tigers' paws to dinosaur eggs, is rampant. Without doubt, someone is banking "dirty" money in the territory.

"We are at the upper end of the spectrum in terms of due diligence," said Mr Went, refusing even to hint at likely culprits. "I wouldn't like to say who they are — we've been in business 304 years, and you have to remember that you can blow it overnight, no matter how attractive the opportunities appear."

A Coutts client must have

minimum net worth of \$1 million, although, to be particularly attractive to the bank, liquid assets of \$5 million are nearer the mark. Assets managed by Coutts's two Asian offices, in Hong Kong and Singapore, are \$500 million, with total assets managed for Asian clients exceeding \$2 billion.

Coutts is seen as a small player in the territory, and few rivals divulge similar comparative details. All, however, protest innocence.

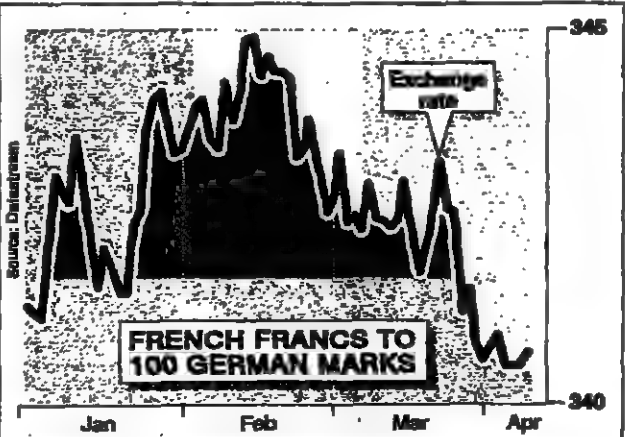
"It is a little bit tricky here in Asia because people don't like to show who they are, but that information is treated very confidentially and it has resulted in us never really ever having had any problems with dirty money," said Knut Reinertz, of Banque Generale du Luxembourg.

Max Gunther, regional manager with the Credit Suisse private banking unit for East Asia, says: "It doesn't matter where the money is booked, we will apply rigid screening of clients here, and whether we refer to Zurich or London or Luxembourg, we do the due diligence here. All the money we give out, whatever the location, is clean — we don't have first-rated offshore centres, second-rated and so on — it's just clean money. If you want to be in private banking in the long run, there's only one approach — the professional approach."

Observers of the sector admit that Mr Went's remarks touched a nerve. "The threat of money laundering is very powerful in Hong Kong," said a James Capel analyst. "We are very worried about being tainted."

The problem for Hong Kong, another analyst said, is the need to find clients in an increasingly competitive market. "The place is grossly overbanked," he said. "Some of the smaller Swiss banks are hungry for business — so money is booked into Geneva, and Hong Kong is bypassed altogether. It's all lost in a series of code numbers."

Tracing any client would be nearly impossible, he said, and even banking experts steeped in the ways of the territory's unspoken financial freemasonry would be unaware of the conduits for Chinese money. "These people," he says, "are very smart."



Feeling smug over Lloyd's

FROM R.V. MUNDEN
Sir, For the past few years your letters section has been swelled by comments about Lloyd's of London. Correspondence on this subject has accused, defended, expressed outrage, shown quiet resignation (rare), spluttered, analysed and pleaded.

I cannot recall, though, any letters which have been smug and I thought I should fill this void.

In 1993 I was invited to become a name and, because I knew little about the market, I asked to meet a selection of active participants in order to gain some understanding of the people to whom it was proposed I should entrust my future financial security.

This request was greeted with surprise but appropriate arrangements were made. It took only a few discussions for me to develop strong reservations about becoming involved.

Apprenticeships for craftsmen of the next decade

FROM Mr James Paice, MP
Sir, The plea from Mr T. P. Hartley (Business Letters, March 28) for "a return to the rigours of a formal system of apprenticeship training" is well timed. The Government launched Modern Apprenticeships nationwide in September of last year, and only recently received enthusiastic endorsement from Sir Ron Dearing in his report on the education and training of 16-19 year-olds.

Modern Apprenticeships are based on frameworks designed by employers. They take the best aspects from the old-style apprenticeships and combine them with modern qualifications and learning

methods. They are not about time serving. They offer an equal alternative, via the work-based route, to a qualification that can lead on to higher education — if the apprentice wishes. Modern Apprenticeships will provide highly trained craftsmen and women, technicians and junior managers who are better prepared and motivated to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

Modern Apprenticeships cover 55 industrial and commercial sectors, including those that traditional apprenticeships never covered, such as information technology and business administration. All the signs are that young

people and employers are very enthusiastic about the initiative, which offers a long-term commitment to high-level training.

Modern Apprenticeships are a serious reform of training in this country. They will have far-reaching implications for the way we meet the skill needs in the next decade. The Government has much sympathy with Mr Hartley's views — the solutions he calls for are already in place. Yours faithfully, JAMES PAICE, MP Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education and Employment, Great Smith Street, SW1.

writers, those Masters of the Universe at whose feet brokers seemed to worship, appeared to assess risks almost entirely by reference to the past although a few held up dampened forefingers to try to detect any winds of change which might be blowing.

When my reservations became apparent it was suggested that, if I agreed to increase my proposed participation, I might be offered a position on

a "baby syndicate". It was explained that such syndicates were run for the benefit of insiders and special friends; they were virtually risk-free and highly profitable. I would be extremely privileged, as a non-working name, to be given such an opportunity.

This, for me, was the clincher and I politely declined to become a name.

I did not think I was being particularly clever at the time, merely observing basic business practices and standards. I accepted that my decision was based on only a little learning and I am aware it is reprehensible for me to feel smug about it. I just can't help it, though.

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BP15

A MEMBER OF THE CABLE & WIRELESS GROUP

Ashanti continues expansion with Australian miner

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

ASHANTI GOLDFIELDS, the Ghanaian mining company in which Lonrho holds a large stake, has continued its buying spree with the acquisition of Australian-listed Golden Shamrock Mines for £290 million.

It is Ashanti's third acquisition since December and the largest so far. It underlines the determination of the company, which is in the sights of Anglo American Corporation, to remain independent.

GSM's most important asset is its 70 per cent holding in the the Sigiri

goldmine in Guinea, where a feasibility study, published last month, identified 2.37 million ounces of gold. The company, which is also listed in Toronto, also has a 70 per cent share in the Iduapriem goldmine in Ghana.

Ashanti last week made a £65 million agreed offer for International Gold Resources of Toronto. In December it bought Cluff Resources, the London-listed gold company with operations in Africa, for £80 million.

The latest deal is being arranged as a share-swap

merger. GSM shareholders will receive one Ashanti ordinary share for every 22.5 GSM shares, which are valued at Aus\$1.37 (70p). GSM's board supports the merger which Australian courts will have to clear and which its shareholders will then vote on.

Ashanti intends to integrate GSM's West African assets into its own operations. GSM's Australian assets — a coppermine and gold and silver exploration interests — will be sold off.

Analysts welcomed the deal and said that the price was in line with Ashanti's other acquisitions.

Ashanti's advisers said that the GSM had been high on its "shopping list" and that the results of the Sigiri feasibility study had prompted the offer. Analysts said that Ashanti's rapid expansion could make it appear less digestible and discourage the attentions of South Africa's Anglo American Corporation.

The South African company recently acquired 6 per cent of Lonrho, which owns 37 per cent of Ashanti, from Dieter Bock, Lonrho's chief executive. Mr Bock is to denounce the group's mining interests. Anglo American has first right of refusal on Mr Bock's remaining 18 per cent of Lonrho.

Tempus, page 24

MAM bids £93m for healthcare group

By ERIC REGULY

THE private equity arm of Mercury Asset Management (MAM) yesterday offered to buy Priory Hospitals Group, Britain's largest private-sector provider of psychiatric services, for £93 million in cash. It is Mercury's first foray into the healthcare field.

Community Psychiatric Centers of America, Priory's owner, said other potential buyers would not be excluded

as negotiations with Mercury got underway. Founded in 1980, Priory has 15 hospitals and adolescent residential units, with about 700 beds. The company is profitable, though no financial details were available.

Mercury wants to buy Priory because it is the market leader and has strong growth prospects. It plans to float the company within five years.



Tony Wardell watches as a model applies products that Swallowfield hopes to market under its own brand name

Swallowfield buoyed by exports

By MARTIN BARROW

SWALLOWFIELD, the contract manufacturer of branded and private label aerosols and cosmetics, said exports helped to drive profits to a new high in 1995, offsetting the impact of a difficult UK consumer market.

However, the company's Belgian subsidiary continued to trade at a loss despite a number of measures taken to restore profitability.

Pre-tax profits rose to £2.69 million

from £2.56 million on sales that advanced to £37 million from £34.87 million. The company said new contracts were secured in Japan and Australia and non-UK sales now account for 27 per cent of total sales.

Swallowfield, which was formed through a buyout from Cadbury-Schweppes 10 years ago, embraces the companies of Aerosols International, Cosmetics Plus and Parbel, a Belgian

manufacturer. The group's management structure is being centralised to market the Swallowfield brand in preference to the separate companies. The company, whose managing director is Tony Wardell, believes Parbel can be restored to profit by the end of the current year.

Earnings rose to 13.8p a share from 13.3p. There is a final dividend of 3.8p a share, due May 31, lifting the total to 6.5p from 6.2p. The shares rose 3p to 164p.

Lloyds TSB meeting disrupted

Two so-called "ethical streakers" disrupted the first annual meeting of Lloyds TSB yesterday as part of a protest about the bank's stance on Third World debt. Several people were ejected from the meeting in Edinburgh's new conference centre. There were several arrests among the 30 protesters, who were led by Lloyds and Midland Boycott (LAMB). A Lloyds TSB spokesman said Sir Robin Ibbotson, the company chairman, had offered to meet LAMB in February.

French strike

France Telecom workers began a 24-hour strike yesterday to protest over plans for partial privatisation of the state-owned telephone monopoly. The unions decided on the walkout after the Government's announcement in March that it would begin changing France Telecom into a corporation from a state agency.

Rathbone up

Rathbone Brothers, the private banking group, increased 1995 pre-tax profits to £7.4 million from £6.2 million in 1994. Earnings were 21.3p a share, compared to 21p in the previous year. A final dividend of 6.5p a share, due May 24, lifts the total to 10p (9p).

Polypipe sale

Polypipe, the manufacturer of plastic pipe and fittings, has sold its Allerton Glass business to Magnet, a subsidiary of Berisford, for £7 million. The proceeds will be used to reduce debts. The book value of the net assets sold was £5.1 million at June 30, 1995. Polypipe has also signed a trading agreement with Magnet.

Barcom buy

Barcom has acquired Meadham Plant Company, a supplier of general contractors plant based in Winchester, for a maximum consideration of £2.5 million in cash and shares. In the year ended April 30, 1995, Meadham earned pre-tax profits of £1.04 million.

Slowdown

Singapore's economy is expected to slow down because of rising labour and business costs and a strengthening currency, the Asian Development Bank said. "The outlook for Singapore in the next two years is for a deceleration of growth toward its sustainable long run potential of 7 per cent to 8 per cent," the bank added.

Nurdin & Peacock forecasts squeeze

By SARAH BAGNALL

NURDIN & PEACOCK, the cash-and-carry operator which supplies more than a quarter of a million corner shops, yesterday predicted a shake-out in the wholesale industry.

Richard Fulford, chairman, said: "The industry will go through a period of consolidation in the next few years. We believe we will be well placed to benefit from this." He added that 1995 had been a very difficult year for the group and that conditions remained tough.

He said the company was trying to combat these pressures by investing in information technology and central distribution in a bid to reduce costs and improve margins.

Mr Fulford's remarks came as he revealed a rise in pre-tax profits and exceptional items

from £16.5 million to £19.6 million in the year to December 29. N&P announced it had acquired G Thompson, which trades under the banner of Thompson Wholesale Foods, for £400,000.

Including net one-off items of £1.8 million, profits rose to £21.4 million. The exceptional profit was the net effect of the £7.3 million profit on the sale of the Cargo Club warehouses offset by £5.3 million of provisions. The provision, which follows a strategic review by David Sims, who joined as chief executive in June, covers the cost of writing off surplus stock and certain unpaid supplier accounts.

Sales from continuing operations rose 8.5 per cent to £1.6 billion. The total dividend was lifted from 6.9p to 7.25p. The shares rose 1p to 175p.

Four-year high for oil prices

OIL prices rose to a four-and-a-half year high of \$22.66 a barrel yesterday as a rally picked up momentum after a brief pause for breath. Analysts say crude could rise further as buyers in the West scramble to rebuild depleted refined oil product inventories.

While oil product prices, in particular petrol, might stay firm for longer, crude would probably start to reverse as summer approaches and extra supplies come onstream.

After rising 63 cents yesterday, the widely traded Brent crude has recorded an overall gain of more than \$6 since the end of January.

JP Morgan jumps 72% in first quarter

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN NEW YORK

J P MORGAN, the US banking group, reported net income of \$439 million in the first quarter this year, a surge of 72 per cent over the same period in 1995.

Earnings per share for the quarter were \$2.13, against \$1.27 a year ago.

But first-quarter earnings last year included an after-tax charge of \$33 million, or 17 cents a share, related primarily to severance costs.

Douglas Warner, chairman, said: "Growing opportunities to put J P Morgan's worldwide capabilities to work for clients led to strong

first-quarter results." Market-making, investment banking, and investment management all produced substantial gains, he said.

Revenues totalled \$1.740 billion in the first three months, an advance of 25 per cent from last year's \$1.388 billion.

Net interest revenue declined 21 per cent, to \$306 million, reflecting lower returns from asset and liability management in the United States and a decrease in trading-related net interest revenue. Trading revenue rose to \$758 million from \$303 million.

Daimler-Benz chief talks of 'further tough decisions'

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN STUTTGART

BASED on a rise in first-quarter sales, Daimler-Benz, the industrial group, said yesterday it expects to show an operating profit this year.

In the first three months of 1996, Daimler's group sales rose 7 per cent to DM23.6 billion from an adjusted DM22 billion for that period last year. Manfred Gentz, chief financial officer, cautiously predicted a full-year sales increase of between 5 and 10 per cent.

But Jürgen Schrempf, the company's chairman, gave warning that "further tough decisions still have to be taken in 1996" to reverse 1995's substantial loss and restore earnings to a satisfactory level.

One tough decision previously announced was that Daimler would not pay investors a dividend for the 1995 business year, when the



Schrempf gave warning

group recorded a net loss of DM5.7 billion. The full-year operating loss was DM1.1 billion.

Daimler-Benz revealed yesterday that its group sales last year rose just 0.8 per cent to DM105.5 billion.

The net loss came mostly from the restructuring of Daimler's widespread opera-

tions, including the divestment of Fokker, the loss-making Dutch aircraft-maker, and the AEG electronics division. Although financial support to Fokker was ended in January, Daimler-Benz is allowed under German law to charge the costs to 1995.

Separately, the Mercedes-Benz luxury car subsidiary said revenues rose 7 per cent in the first three months of this year, reaching DM18.1 billion. Mercedes also reported that higher sales and cost-cutting had improved its final results for 1995, bringing a net profit of DM2.28 billion, up 23 per cent from 1994.

Daimler-Benz Aerospace said its first-quarter sales were up 6 per cent over the same period last year, reaching DM2.16 billion. The aerospace division said it expected "substantial improvement in earnings" this year after dropping Fokker.

For your company golf day... it's the business



The Times MeesPierson Corporate Golf Challenge is open to any company, organisation, partnership, association or body (not golf society) based in the British Isles, which holds a business or company golf day in which 12 or more amateur players take part.

How to participate

- All you have to do to take part in the Challenge is register your golf day, using the form (right) - then on the day itself, submit the results.
- Simply send off the completed form, together with the registration fee of £250 plus VAT as soon as possible, prior to your golf day and no later than 18th September 1996.
- The top four scoring golfers in your golf day's individual Strokeplay competition - including up to three guests (your option) - will become eligible to represent your company (as a team) at one of the twelve regional finals in October this year.
- Your team of four will, if their aggregate Strokeplay score is among the top 25 aggregate scores in your region, qualify for a regional final.
- The winning company from each of the twelve regions will compete in the national final at Hyatt La Manga Club Resort in Spain in November. To be filmed for a Sky TV broadcast.
- Golf days registered after 18th September or played after 27th September will be entered for the 1997 Challenge.

Benefits of Entry

- Your golf day featured in The Times 'forthcoming golf days' feature list.
- Your golf day results featured in The Times 'golf day results' column.
- A set of four personalised event trophies for your golf day winners.
- Copies of The Times delivered to the golf club on the morning of your golf day.
- Complimentary copies of the event newsletter on your golf day.
- A golf day management software program for use on your golf day.
- Complimentary copy of the Official event magazine 'The Business Golfer'.
- A chance for your company golf day winners to qualify as a team to play in a Regional Final.
- The opportunity, should they win the Regional Final, to play in the National Final, to be held in November 1996, at The Hyatt La Manga Club in Spain and filmed for a Sky TV broadcast.
- The winners of the National Final will be invited to participate in the World Corporate Golf Challenge.
- Other promotional opportunities for the golf day organiser.

Rules and Regulations

The competition is approved by the R&A for payment of expenses. *Rule 1-8 Ex. 7 R&A/96. A full set of rules and conditions will be sent with acknowledgement of receipt of the registration form, or you may obtain a copy or further information by contacting the Challenge organisers at:

0171 436 3415 or
0141 221 2225 (Scotland)
or by fax to 0171 436 2581

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Company Registration

Company name.....
Company address.....
Post Code.....
Telephone No.....
Facsimile.....
E-mail.....
Name of company representative (to whom all correspondence will be sent).....
Will be holding a golf day at.....
Address.....
County.....
(date) and will be attended by approximately..... golfers.
If the venue and date of your golf day have yet to be finalised please leave blank and inform us as soon as it is confirmed.

Trophy Requirements

The trophies for your four qualifiers will be sent to you for presentation on your golf day. Unless you state otherwise, your company name, as spelt out in section 1 above, will be inserted, as will the date and name of the golf club. If you require an abbreviation of your company name or indeed another name altogether...

Please print here:.....

I accept the terms and conditions for company registration and enclose a cheque for £176.25 inc. VAT, made payable to The Times MeesPierson C.C.C. Please send this completed form to The Times MeesPierson Corporate Golf Challenge, PO Box 4, Harpenden, Hertfordshire AL5 3DL. A VAT invoice will be sent with acknowledgement.

Signed..... Date.....

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NOTES - RESORTS - SUITES

Shares slip in late trading

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

100 Lbs. Company Price % + - % PE					100 Lbs. Company Price % + - % PE					
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES					ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES					
556	680	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
557	675	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
558	670	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
559	665	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
560	660	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
561	655	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
562	650	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
563	645	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
564	640	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
565	635	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
566	630	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
567	625	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
568	620	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
569	615	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
570	610	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
571	605	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
572	600	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
573	595	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
574	590	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
575	585	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
576	580	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
577	575	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
578	570	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
579	565	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
580	560	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
581	555	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
582	550	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
583	545	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
584	540	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
585	535	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
586	530	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
587	525	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
588	520	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
589	515	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
590	510	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
591	505	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
592	500	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
593	495	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
594	490	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
595	485	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
596	480	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
597	475	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
598	470	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
599	465	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34
600	460	Alford Distillers	405	-	7	80	127	54	1	34

BANKS									
3205	2745	AMERICAN	375	-	31	43			
653	335	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
654	330	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
655	325	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
656	320	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
657	315	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
658	310	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
659	305	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
660	300	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
661	295	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
662	290	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
663	285	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
664	280	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
665	275	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
666	270	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
667	265	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
668	260	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
669	255	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
670	250	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
671	245	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
672	240	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
673	235	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
674	230	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
675	225	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
676	220	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
677	215	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
678	210	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
679	205	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
680	200	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
681	195	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
682	190	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
683	185	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
684	180	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
685	175	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
686	170	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
687	165	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
688	160	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
689	155	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
690	150	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
691	145	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
692	140	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
693	135	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
694	130	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
695	125	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
696	120	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
697	115	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
698	110	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
699	105	Alley City	561	-	4	10			
700	100	Alley City	561	-	4	10			

BREWERS, PUBS & REST									
50	35	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
51	30	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
52	25	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
53	20	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
54	15	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
55	10	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
56	5	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
57	0	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
58	35	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
59	30	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
60	25	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
61	20	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
62	15	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
63	10	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
64	5	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
65	0	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
66	35	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
67	30	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
68	25	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
69	20	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
70	15	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
71	10	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
72	5	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
73	0	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
74	35	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
75	30	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
76	25	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
77	20	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
78	15	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
79	10	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
80	5	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
81	0	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
82	35	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
83	30	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
84	25	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
85	20	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
86	15	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
87	10	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
88	5	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
89	0	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
90	35	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
91	30	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
92	25	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
93	20	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
94	15	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
95	10	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
96	5	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
97	0	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
98	35	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
99	30	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
100	25	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		

BUILDING & CONSTRUCT									
13	125	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
14	120	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
15	115	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
16	110	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
17	105	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
18	100	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
19	95	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
20	90	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
21	85	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
22	80	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
23	75	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
24	70	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
25	65	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
26	60	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
27	55	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
28	50	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
29	45	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
30	40	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
31	35	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
32	30	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
33	25	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
34	20	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
35	15	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
36	10	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		
37	5	Abate Bros	320	-	12	33	172		

Shares slip in late trade

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trading. The previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

High	Low	Company	Price	Chg	P/E	High	Low	Company	Price	Chg	P/E	High	Low	Company	Price	Chg	P/E
255.00	254.00	British Steel	254.00	-12	42.0	415.00	414.00	Comwell	414.00	-33	30.0	681.00	679.00	British Steel	679.00	-10	42.0
254.00	253.00	British Steel	253.00	-9	41.5	414.00	413.00	Comwell	413.00	-34	29.5	680.00	678.00	British Steel	678.00	-11	41.5
253.00	252.00	British Steel	252.00	-8	41.0	413.00	412.00	Comwell	412.00	-35	29.0	679.00	677.00	British Steel	677.00	-12	41.0
252.00	251.00	British Steel	251.00	-7	40.5	412.00	411.00	Comwell	411.00	-36	28.5	678.00	676.00	British Steel	676.00	-13	40.5
251.00	250.00	British Steel	250.00	-6	40.0	411.00	410.00	Comwell	410.00	-37	28.0	677.00	675.00	British Steel	675.00	-14	40.0
250.00	249.00	British Steel	249.00	-5	39.5	410.00	409.00	Comwell	409.00	-38	27.5	676.00	674.00	British Steel	674.00	-15	39.5
249.00	248.00	British Steel	248.00	-4	39.0	409.00	408.00	Comwell	408.00	-39	27.0	675.00	673.00	British Steel	673.00	-16	39.0
248.00	247.00	British Steel	247.00	-3	38.5	408.00	407.00	Comwell	407.00	-40	26.5	674.00	672.00	British Steel	672.00	-17	38.5
247.00	246.00	British Steel	246.00	-2	38.0	407.00	406.00	Comwell	406.00	-41	26.0	673.00	671.00	British Steel	671.00	-18	38.0
246.00	245.00	British Steel	245.00	-1	37.5	406.00	405.00	Comwell	405.00	-42	25.5	672.00	670.00	British Steel	670.00	-19	37.5
245.00	244.00	British Steel	244.00	-2	37.0	405.00	404.00	Comwell	404.00	-43	25.0	671.00	669.00	British Steel	669.00	-20	37.0
244.00	243.00	British Steel	243.00	-3	36.5	404.00	403.00	Comwell	403.00	-44	24.5	670.00	668.00	British Steel	668.00	-21	36.5
243.00	242.00	British Steel	242.00	-4	36.0	403.00	402.00	Comwell	402.00	-45	24.0	669.00	667.00	British Steel	667.00	-22	36.0
242.00	241.00	British Steel	241.00	-5	35.5	402.00	401.00	Comwell	401.00	-46	23.5	668.00	666.00	British Steel	666.00	-23	35.5
241.00	240.00	British Steel	240.00	-6	35.0	401.00	400.00	Comwell	400.00	-47	23.0	667.00	665.00	British Steel	665.00	-24	35.0
240.00	239.00	British Steel	239.00	-7	34.5	400.00	399.00	Comwell	399.00	-48	22.5	666.00	664.00	British Steel	664.00	-25	34.5
239.00	238.00	British Steel	238.00	-8	34.0	399.00	398.00	Comwell	398.00	-49	22.0	665.00	663.00	British Steel	663.00	-26	34.0
238.00	237.00	British Steel	237.00	-9	33.5	398.00	397.00	Comwell	397.00	-50	21.5	664.00	662.00	British Steel	662.00	-27	33.5
237.00	236.00	British Steel	236.00	-10	33.0	397.00	396.00	Comwell	396.00	-51	21.0	663.00	661.00	British Steel	661.00	-28	33.0
236.00	235.00	British Steel	235.00	-11	32.5	396.00	395.00	Comwell	395.00	-52	20.5	662.00	660.00	British Steel	660.00	-29	32.5
235.00	234.00	British Steel	234.00	-12	32.0	395.00	394.00	Comwell	394.00	-53	20.0	661.00	659.00	British Steel	659.00	-30	32.0
234.00	233.00	British Steel	233.00	-13	31.5	394.00	393.00	Comwell	393.00	-54	19.5	660.00	658.00	British Steel	658.00	-31	31.5
233.00	232.00	British Steel	232.00	-14	31.0	393.00	392.00	Comwell	392.00	-55	19.0	659.00	657.00	British Steel	657.00	-32	31.0
232.00	231.00	British Steel	231.00	-15	30.5	392.00	391.00	Comwell	391.00	-56	18.5	658.00	656.00	British Steel	656.00	-33	30.5
231.00	230.00	British Steel	230.00	-16	30.0	391.00	390.00	Comwell	390.00	-57	18.0	657.00	655.00	British Steel	655.00	-34	30.0
230.00	229.00	British Steel	229.00	-17	29.5	390.00	389.00	Comwell	389.00	-58	17.5	656.00	654.00	British Steel	654.00	-35	29.5
229.00	228.00	British Steel	228.00	-18	29.0	389.00	388.00	Comwell	388.00	-59	17.0	655.00	653.00	British Steel	653.00	-36	29.0
228.00	227.00	British Steel	227.00	-19	28.5	388.00	387.00	Comwell	387.00	-60	16.5	654.00	652.00	British Steel	652.00	-37	28.5
227.00	226.00	British Steel	226.00	-20	28.0	387.00	386.00	Comwell	386.00	-61	16.0	653.00	651.00	British Steel	651.00	-38	28.0
226.00	225.00	British Steel	225.00	-21	27.5	386.00	385.00	Comwell	385.00	-62	15.5	652.00	650.00	British Steel	650.00	-39	27.5
225.00	224.00	British Steel	224.00	-22	27.0	385.00	384.00	Comwell	384.00	-63	15.0	651.00	649.00	British Steel	649.00	-40	27.0
224.00	223.00	British Steel	223.00	-23	26.5	384.00	383.00	Comwell	383.00	-64	14.5	650.00	648.00	British Steel	648.00	-41	26.5
223.00	222.00	British Steel	222.00	-24	26.0	383.00	382.00	Comwell	382.00	-65	14.0	649.00	647.00	British Steel	647.00	-42	26.0
222.00	221.00	British Steel	221.00	-25	25.5	382.00	381.00	Comwell	381.00	-66	13.5	648.00	646.00	British Steel	646.00	-43	25.5
221.00	220.00	British Steel	220.00	-26	25.0	381.00	380.00	Comwell	380.00	-67	13.0	647.00	645.00	British Steel	645.00	-44	25.0
220.00	219.00	British Steel	219.00	-27	24.5	380.00	379.00	Comwell	379.00	-68	12.5	646.00	644.00	British Steel	644.00	-45	24.5
219.00	218.00	British Steel	218.00	-28	24.0	379.00	378.00	Comwell	378.00	-69	12.0	645.00	643.00	British Steel	643.00	-46	24.0
218.00	217.00	British Steel	217.00	-29	23.5	378.00	377.00	Comwell	377.00	-70	11.5	644.00	642.00	British Steel	642.00	-47	23.5
217.00	216.00	British Steel	216.00	-30	23.0	377.00	376.00	Comwell	376.00	-71	11.0	643.00	641.00	British Steel	641.00	-48	23.0
216.00	215.00	British Steel	215.00	-31	22.5	376.00	375.00	Comwell	375.00	-72	10.5	642.00	640.00	British Steel	640.00	-49	22.5
215.00	214.00	British Steel	214.00	-32	22.0	375.00	374.00	Comwell	374.00	-73	10.0	641.00	639.00	British Steel	639.00	-50	22.0
214.00	213.00	British Steel	213.00	-33	21.5	374.00	373.00	Comwell	373.00	-74	9.5	640.00	638.00	British Steel	638.00	-51	21.5
213.00	212.00	British Steel	212.00	-34	21.0	373.00	372.00	Comwell	372.00	-75	9.0	639.00	637.00	British Steel	637.00	-52	21.0
212.00	211.00	British Steel	211.00	-35	20.5	372.00	371.00	Comwell	371.00	-76	8.5	638.00	636.00	British Steel	636.00	-53	20.5
211.00	210.00	British Steel	210.00	-36	20.0	371.00	370.00	Comwell	370.00	-77	8.0	637.00	635.00	British Steel	635.00	-54	20.0
210.00	209.00	British Steel	209.00	-37	19.5	370.00	369.00	Comwell	369.00	-78	7.5	636.00	634.00	British Steel	634.00	-55	19.5
209.00	208.00	British Steel	208.00	-38	19.0	369.00	368.00	Comwell	368.00	-79	7.0	635.00	633.00	British Steel	633.00	-56	19.0
208.00	207.00	British Steel	207.00	-39	18.5	368.00	367.00	Comwell	367.00	-80	6.5	634.00	632.00	British Steel	632.00	-57	18.5
207.00	206.00	British Steel	206.00	-40	18.0	367.00	366.00	Comwell	366.00	-81	6.0	633.00	631.00	British Steel	631.00	-58	18.0
206.00	205.00	British Steel	205.00	-41	17.5	366.00	365.00	Comwell	365.00	-82	5.5	632.00	630.00	British Steel	630.00	-59	17.5
205.00	204.00	British Steel	204.00	-42	17.0	365.00	364.00	Comwell	364.00	-83	5.0	631.00	629.00	British Steel	629.00	-60	17.0
204.00	203.00	British Steel	203.00	-43	16.5	364.00	363.00	Comwell	363.00	-84	4.5	630.00	628.00	British Steel	628.00	-61	16.5
203.00	202.00	British Steel	202.00	-44	16.0	363.00	362.00	Comwell	362.00	-85	4.0	629.00	627.00	British Steel	627.00	-62	16.0
202.00	201.00	British Steel	201.00	-45	15.5	362.00	361.00	Comwell	361.00	-86	3.5	628.00	626.00	British Steel	626.00	-63	15.5
201.00	200.00	British Steel	200.00	-46	15.0	361.00	360.00	Comwell	360.00	-87	3.0	627.00	625.00	British Steel	625.00	-64	15.0
200.00	199.00	British Steel	199.00	-47	14.5	360.00	359.00	Comwell	359.00	-88	2.5	626.00	624.00	British Steel	624.00	-65	14.5
199.00	198.00	British Steel	198.00	-48	14.0	359.00	358.00	Comwell	358.00	-89	2.0	625.00	623.00	British Steel	623.00	-66	14.0
198.00	197.00	British Steel	197.00	-49	13.5	358.00	357.00	Comwell	357.00	-90	1.5	624.00	622.00	British Steel	622.00	-67	13.5
197.00	196.00	British Steel	196.00	-50	13.0	357.00	356.00	Comwell	356.00	-91	1.0	623.00	621.00	British Steel	621.00	-68	13.0
196.00	195.00	British Steel	195.00	-51	12.5	356.00	355.00	Comwell	355.00	-92	0.5	622.00	620.00	British Steel	620.00	-69	12.5
195.00	194.00	British Steel	194.00	-52	12.0	355.00	354.00	Comwell	354.00	-93	0.0	621.00	619.00	British Steel	619.00	-70	12.0
194.00	193.00	British Steel	193.00	-53	11.5	354.00	353.00	Comwell	353.00	-94	-0.5	620.00	618.00	British Steel	618.00	-71	11.5
193.00	192.00	British Steel	192.00	-54	11.0	353.00	352.00	Comwell	352.00	-95	-1.0	619.00	617.00	British Steel	617.00	-72	11.0
192.00	191.00	British Steel	191.00	-55	10.5	352.00	351.00	Comwell	351.00	-96	-1.5	618.00	616.00	British Steel	616.00	-73	10.5
191.00	190.00	British Steel	190.00	-56	10.0	351.00	350.00	Comwell	350.00	-97	-2.0	617.00	615.00	British Steel	615.00	-74	10.0
190.00	189.00	British Steel	189.00	-57	9.5	350.00	349.00	Comwell	349.00	-98	-2.5	616.00	614.00	British Steel	614.00	-75	9.5
189.00	188.00	British Steel	188.00	-58	9.0	349.00	348.00	Comwell	348.00	-99	-3.0	615.00	613.00	British Steel	613.00	-76	9.0
188.00	187.00	British Steel	187.00	-59	8.5	348.00	347.00	Comwell	347.00	-100	-3.5	614.00	612.00	British Steel	612.00	-77	8.5
187.00	186.00	British Steel	186.00	-60	8.0	347.00	346.00	Comwell	346.00	-101	-4.0	613.00	611.00	British Steel	611.00	-78	8.0
186.00	185.00	British Steel	185.00	-61	7.5	346.00	345.00	Comwell	345.00	-102	-4.5	612.00	610.00	British Steel	610.00	-79	7.5
185.00	184.00	British Steel	184.00	-62	7.0	345.00	344.00	Comwell	344.00	-103	-5.0	611.00	609.00	British Steel	609.00	-80	7.0
184.00	183.00	British Steel	183.00	-63													

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vident. Changes, yields and

1995	1994	1993	1992	1991	1990	1989	1988	1987	1986	1985	1984	1983	1982	1981	1980	1979	1978	1977	1976	1975	1974	1973	1972	1971	1970	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963	1962	1961	1960	1959	1958	1957	1956	1955	1954	1953	1952	1951	1950	1949	1948	1947	1946	1945	1944	1943	1942	1941	1940	1939	1938	1937	1936	1935	1934	1933	1932	1931	1930	1929	1928	1927	1926	1925	1924	1923	1922	1921	1920	1919	1918	1917	1916	1915	1914	1913	1912	1911	1910	1909	1908	1907	1906	1905	1904	1903	1902	1901	1900	1899	1898	1897	1896	1895	1894	1893	1892	1891	1890	1889	1888	1887	1886	1885	1884	1883	1882	1881	1880	1879	1878	1877	1876	1875	1874	1873	1872	1871	1870	1869	1868	1867	1866	1865	1864	1863	1862	1861	1860	1859	1858	1857	1856	1855	1854	1853	1852	1851	1850	1849	1848	1847	1846	1845	1844	1843	1842	1841	1840	1839	1838	1837	1836	1835	1834	1833	1832	1831	1830	1829	1828	1827	1826	1825	1824	1823	1822	1821	1820	1819	1818	1817	1816	1815	1814	1813	1812	1811	1810	1809	1808	1807	1806	1805	1804	1803	1802	1801	1800	1799	1798	1797	1796	1795	1794	1793	1792	1791	1790	1789	1788	1787	1786	1785	1784	1783	1782	1781	1780	1779	1778	1777	1776	1775	1774	1773	1772	1771	1770	1769	1768	1767	1766	1765	1764	1763	1762	1761	1760	1759	1758	1757	1756	1755	1754	1753	1752	1751	1750	1749	1748	1747	1746	1745	1744	1743	1742	1741	1740	1739	1738	1737	1736	1735	1734	1733	1732	1731	1730	1729	1728	1727	1726	1725	1724	1723	1722	1721	1720	1719	1718	1717	1716	1715	1714	1713	1712	1711	1710	1709	1708	1707	1706	1705	1704	1703	1702	1701	1700	1699	1698	1697	1696	1695	1694	1693	1692	1691	1690	1689	1688	1687	1686	1685	1684	1683	1682	1681	1680	1679	1678	1677	1676	1675	1674	1673	1672	1671	1670	1669	1668	1667	1666	1665	1664	1663	1662	1661	1660	1659	1658	1657	1656	1655	1654	1653	1652	1651	1650	1649	1648	1647	1646	1645	1644	1643	1642	1641	1640	1639	1638	1637	1636	1635	1634	1633	1632	1631	1630	1629	1628	1627	1626	1625	1624	1623	1622	1621	1620	1619	1618	1617	1616	1615	1614	1613	1612	1611	1610	1609	1608	1607	1606	1605	1604	1603	1602	1601	1600	1599	1598	1597	1596	1595	1594	1593	1592	1591	1590	1589	1588	1587	1586	1585	1584	1583	1582	1581	1580	1579	1578	1577	1576	1575	1574	1573	1572	1571	1570	1569	1568	1567	1566	1565	1564	1563	1562	1561	1560	1559	1558	1557	1556	1555	1554	1553	1552	1551	1550	1549	1548	1547	1546	1545	1544	1543	1542	1541	1540	1539	1538	1537	1536	1535	1534	1533	1532	1531	1530	1529	1528	1527	1526	1525	1524	1523	1522	1521	1520	1519	1518	1517	1516	1515	1514	1513	1512	1511	1510	1509	1508	1507	1506	1505	1504	1503	1502	1501	1500	1499	1498	1497	1496	1495	1494	1493	1492	1491	1490	1489	1488	1487	1486	1485	1484	1483	1482	1481	1480	1479	1478	1477	1476	1475	1474	1473	1472	1471	1470	1469	1468	1467	1466	1465	1464	1463	1462	1461	1460	1459	1458	1457	1456	1455	1454	1453	1452	1451	1450	1449	1448	1447	1446	1445	1444	1443	1442	1441	1440	1439	1438	1437	1436	1435	1434	1433	1432	1431	1430	1429	1428	1427	1426	1425	1424	1423	1422	1421	1420	1419	1418	1417	1416	1415	1414	1413	1412	1411	1410	1409	1408	1407	1406	1405	1404	1403	1402	1401	1400	1399	1398	1397	1396	1395	1394	1393	1392	1391	1390	1389	1388	1387	1386	1385	1384	1383	1382	1381	1380	1379	1378	1377	1376	1375	1374	1373	1372	1371	1370	1369	1368	1367	1366	1365	1364	1363	1362	1361	1360	1359	1358	1357	1356	1355	1354	1353	1352	1351	1350	1349	1348	1347	1346	1345	1344	1343	1342	1341	1340	1339	1338	1337	1336	1335	1334	1333	1332	1331	1330	1329	1328	1327	1326	1325	1324	1323	1322	1321	1320	1319	1318	1317	1316	1315	1314	1313	1312	1311	1310	1309	1308	1307	1306	1305	1304	1303	1302	1301	1300	1299	1298	1297	1296	1295	1294	1293	1292	1291	1290	1289	1288	1287	1286	1285	1284	1283	1282	1281	1280	1279	1278	1277	1276	1275	1274	1273	1272	1271	1270	1269	1268	1267	1266	1265	1264	1263	1262	1261	1260	1259	1258	1257	1256	1255	1254	1253	1252	1251	1250	1249	1248	1247	1246	1245	1244	1243	1242	1241	1240	1239	1238	1237	1236	1235	1234	1233	1232	1231	1230	1229	1228	1227	1226	1225	1224	1223	1222	1221	1220	1219	1218	1217	1216	1215	1214	1213	1212	1211	1210	1209	1208	1207	1206	1205	1204	1203	1202	1201	1200	1199	1198	1197	1196	1195	1194	1193	1192	1191	1190	1189	1188	1187	1186	1185	1184	1183	1182	1181	1180	1179	1178	1177	1176	1175	1174	1173	1172	1171	1170	1169	1168	1167	1166	1165	1164	1163	1162	1161	1160	1159	1158	1157	1156	1155	1154	1153	1152	1151	1150	1149	1148	1147	1146	1145	1144	1143	1142	1141	1140	1139	1138	1137	1136	1135	1134	1133	1132	1131	1130	1129	1128	1127	1126	1125	1124	1123	1122	1121	1120	1119	1118	1117	1116	1115	1114	1113	1112	1111	1110	1109	1108	1107	1106	1105	1104	1103	1102	1101	1100	1099	1098	1097	1096	1095	1094	1093	1092	1091	1090	1089	1088	1087	1086	1085	1084	1083	1082	1081	1080	1079	1078	1077	1076	1075	1074	1073	1072	1071	1070	1069	1068	1067	1066	1065	1064	1063	1062	1061	1060	1059	1058	1057	1056	1055	1054	1053	1052	1051	1050	1049	1048	1047	1046	1045	1044	1043	1042	1041	1040	1039	1038	1037	1036	1035	1034	1033	1032	1031	1030	1029	1028	1027	1026	1025	1024	1023	1022	1021	1020	1019	1018	1017	1016	1015	1014	1013	1012	1011	1010	1009	1008	1007	1006	1005	1004	1003	1002	1001	1000	999	998	997	996	995	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■ OPERA 1

Music promoter Raymond Gubbay attacks our critic for his reaction to the Albert Hall *Bohème*



■ OPERA 2

... and Rodney Milnes defends his view of a "crummy and ill-organised" production

THE TIMES
ARTS

■ MUSIC

A tour by the Warsaw Sinfonia launches public celebrations of Lord Menuhin's eightieth birthday



■ TOMORROW

Back in his *Salad Days*: Julian Slade reflects on the show that made him famous

Seconds out for a real fight at the opera

When *The Times*'s chief opera critic, Rodney Milnes (below left), wrote a scathing review of an Albert Hall production of *La Bohème* mounted by Raymond Gubbay (right), classical music's most bullish impresario declared



that he had been sandbagged by an out-of-touch purist who resented all attempts to popularise the art form. "Nonsense!" Milnes retorted. "The plain fact is that this *Bohème* was no good."



Nevertheless, the disagreement brings to the boil a row that

has been simmering for several years — about how far opera promoters can or should go in an attempt to produce "opera for the masses". Here, impresario and critic engage in a frank exchange of views about how "arena opera" should be staged — and reported



La Bohème at the Albert Hall: "Forty thousand people were happy," says the impresario. "They deserved better," says the critic

'You hate me making money' ... and you hate criticism'

DEAR RODNEY,

"Rodney's in tonight." Those words, whispered backstage, are enough to cause even the strongest singer to blanch. What will the Jekyll and Hyde of the operatic world, with your black or white reviews, make of the latest offering? I had understood only too well, having interpreted the runic symbols scattered by you over the preceding few weeks, that we were in for a stinker. And to be fair, you didn't fail us. You perceived a threat to the operatic establishment, and what better way to assert your authority than by a total put-down in print?

It was a chance remark from one of your colleagues, "I cannot understand why Rodney went so over the top about *La Bohème*", which really set me thinking. It was you who had fought a rear-guard action against the use of surtitles, and here you are again, blasting away at amplification. Operatic purism may hold you in good stead among the intendants of the world's opera houses but I doubt whether many of the 40,000 people who came to *Bohème* would have been happy without either surtitles or amplification.

Nothing about *Bohème* pleased you, right down to the supposedly uncommitted con-

ductor (could you see him reading the *Beano* in the pit)? I do not want to conduct a post mortem and anyone wanting to see a well-balanced counterpoint can look at Humphrey Burton's piece in the April issue of *Classic FM* magazine: "Raymond Gubbay's *La Bohème* at the Royal Albert Hall proves that arena opera can be exciting and give real value for money."

You suggested that the production should have been given without any amplification. Yet how this could be made to work with a production given in the round is far from clear. Quoting specific isolated moments to justify your argument misses completely the point of how a well-balanced sound can be obtained throughout the performance in all parts of the auditorium. The idea of amplifying any opera is one that appears to fill you with horror, yet you managed to sit through an amplified *Turandot* at Wembley four years ago without having to reach for your smelling salts. Where were you when the Royal Opera gave a concert performance (originally announced as being semi-staged) last May at the Royal Albert Hall of *Un ballo in maschera* which was amplified throughout?

Your readers will know that you regularly travel round the opera houses of Europe and America. You must have come across the use of amplification not only at the Albert Hall, where we made no pretence about its use, but also in more covert situations where its use is sometimes disguised. Incidentally, why don't opera critics follow the convention of travel writers and tell us who has paid for the travel on each occasion — or is this just too revealing? The purist approach to opera alongside the question of amplification are issues that need airing, but sadly you have refused to emerge from your closet to debate these in public.

Readers of *The Times* enjoy a wide range of music and entertainment and the advertisements in the newspaper reflect this. Theatre critics seem able to move between commercial West End productions and the subsidised theatres with no difficulty at all. Yet you are totally incapable of dealing rationally with anything put on commercially without reaching for the virtuosos. The thought of anyone trying to make money out of music seems beyond your comprehension, yet you cheerfully support unquestioningly subsidised organisations which pay out much larger

amounts on artists' and conductors' fees.

Opera in this country is underfunded, but so are schools, hospitals and much else. Yet when Covent Garden fails to make adequate contingency plans for its closure period and now looks set to lead a nomadic existence round an odd collection of rag, tag and bobtail venues which happen to be available to them, you seem content to sit back complacently, watching it all happen instead of taking the lead by asking the necessary penetrating questions as to how such a situation could ever have arisen.

On February 6 next year, you — as a respectable member of the Establishment — will no doubt be remembering the 45th anniversary of the Queen's accession. I, on the other hand, will be at the first night of my next Albert Hall opera. Sorry, I cannot yet disclose its name, as we have not made any formal announcement, but I will give you a clue: it is set somewhere in southwest Europe and there's a bullfighter and ... but no, I do not want to give too much away. The "nation's village hall" will be playing host to a new show — and you, I hope, will be far, far away.

RAYMOND GUBBAY

DEAR RAYMOND,

How nice to hear from you. It's right that promoters and journalists should maintain a dialogue, though preferably at a slightly more positive level. But why did you wait for so long before writing? For heaven's sake, your dreary *Bohème* happened weeks ago now. I've had a happy time speculating about who's been winding you up, and it's generous of you to drop the odd clue in your letter.

You probably waited for so long in the hope that readers would have forgotten what I wrote, and so accept your slyly partial version. Now, amplification does not fill me with horror — remember my cheerful reactions to the joint Gubbay-Royal Opera *Turandot* at Wembley, which worked. Singers have done without amplification at the Albert Hall since it was built, and thank you for reminding me that it was Pavarotti who broke that tradition last year (I hope you don't take Pavarotti as a role model in other respects). Glyndebourne does without it on the Albert Hall platform every year.

But you decide to do *Bohème* in the round, and use this as an excuse for amplification. Sorry, a little company called Nexus Opera did *Curlew River* in the round in 1986,

and no amplification was needed. Of course, Nexus Opera employed a proper director (Ronald Eyre), which you didn't. I forebore to name the unfortunate director you engaged, of whom few had heard and few will, and who seemed further to use amplification as an excuse for crummy, ill-organised direction.

There is no need for a debate on amplification. It is either well done, as it is at the National, at West End theatres (sometimes), indeed (despite denials) at the Coliseum, and of course at your Wembley *Turandot*; or it is badly done, very badly at the first night of your *Bohème*. There is no need for a debate about arena opera: it works if it is well done, as at Verona, Wembley, or the Earl's Court *Carmen* — ie, properly directed and rehearsed; it doesn't work if it is lachrymose. My objections to your *Bohème* were not that it was in the round, nor that it was amplified, but that it was surtitled, not that it was surtitled, but because of well-established artistic standards it was undercast, poorly directed and under-rehearsed. Those 40,000 people deserved better.

It must be galling for you that there are journalists (I wasn't the only one, and you had to reach deep down into the barrel to find a favourable

review) to point these things out. How nice it would be — and there are people at your hated Covent Garden who agree, along with Sir Cliff Richard — if putting on opera were a straight marketing process between manufacturer and consumer, with no tiresome interference from a journalistic consumers' association. Bad luck, that isn't the way it is, yet. So you lash out with a grubby personal attack. So I'm incapable of dealing rationally with anything put on commercially? What about my good-natured review of your concert *Fledermaus* at the Barbican? I sit back complacently watching the collapse of Covent Garden? You obviously don't read *Opera* magazine.

And your snide insinuation about foreign travel? Sorry, ducky, you've got the wrong hack. I actually enjoy going to opera, and most of those trips that the arts editor doesn't send me on I pay for myself, doubtless to the bemusement of *The Times* management. They're called holidays.

In the end, I suppose this is all about me getting caught in the crossfire of the war between you and the Royal Opera. Something horrible must have happened when you collaborated on that *Turandot*. In the build-up to

your *Bohème*, you seemed virtually to take over the feature pages of the national press, promoting whiter-than-white, cheap (if Gubbay opera-for-the-people versus nasty, elitist, expensive Covent Garden, with little reference to why Covent Garden was expensive. The day you put on things matching the professional know-how, built up over 50 years, that we take for granted at Covent Garden is the day you can join that battle in earnest. The seat prices for your *Bohème* were marginally less than those for the Coliseum, and more than those for an outstanding *Bohème* at Opera North a few weeks before — doubly galling.

Your attempt to label me as a pillar of the Establishment will cause great merriment to all who know me, and it will be interesting to see if the arts editor sends me to your *Carmen* next year, foiling my natural inclination to sit at home wallowing in royalist sentiment. Talking of which, one image of your *Bohème* haunts me still: seeing you in the interval standing in a Grand Tier box with waxwork solemnity next to the Princess of Wales. Ah, I thought, doubtless unworthy, that's why we're all here.

RODNEY MILNES

Benign start to birthday

CONCERT

Warsaw Sinfonia/
Menuhin
Barbican

READING a biographical note for Lord Menuhin, you are struck by the thought that his achievements and honours — including no fewer than 30 doctorates — would be enough to furnish a curriculum vitae for each member of a modest-sized orchestra. In an extraordinary career already lasting more than seven decades, he has gained countless admirers and friends, and probably fewer enemies than any other professional musician.

The affection in which he is held was clear from Tuesday's concert with the Warsaw Sinfonia, an ensemble he was instrumental in founding in the 1980s. Menuhin celebrates his eightieth birthday this month but shows no sign of flagging. He has recently committed to disc a complete Beethoven cycle with these players, and the Third Symphony (*Eroica*) was the main work in Tuesday's programme. The tide of support comes

not only from the audience but also from the orchestra. That is just as well, for as a conductor Menuhin has rarely stamped his authority on his interpretations in the way he did as a violinist. It is partly a question of technique — Menuhin's vigorous arm movements hardly amount to a beat — but partly, I feel, a matter of temperament. The vast fund of humanity in the man brings forth performances that are benign and equitable, lacking grit and sheer aggression.

The harsher aspects of the *Eroica* were not realised, and I felt short-changed, too, by some of the grander moments, which needed more space to expand. But there was also a good deal to admire: the carefully graded climaxes of the Funeral March compelled attention, as did its desolate ending; the trio of horns in the middle section of the Scherzo shaped their phrases beautifully; and the Scherzo itself was articulated with clarity.

The soloist in Beethoven's Piano Concerto No 4 in G major was, appropriately, a graduate of the Yehudi Menuhin School: R. Hyung-Ki Joo. He brought a freshness of approach that inclined one to overlook the handful of minor inaccuracies. In particular, I relished the individual handling of the cadenzas and the spontaneity of the repartee between soloist and orchestra in the finale. That joy in communication is all too rare in professional music-making.

BARRY MILLINGTON

Flight of the jackdaw

Bobby Previte
Purcell Room

THE American drummer/composer Bobby Previte accounts for his current compositional style — a heady, lively mix of jazz, avant-rock and minimalism — by pointing to the suddenness of his exposure to music other than pop. Growing up in Niagara Falls, he believed not only that the dull roar of the waterfall was "just the sound made by the world" but also that the music he heard on Top 40 radio served a similar function. What he describes as "two forces crashing at the same time — jazz from Mingus and Miles Davis and the Western avant-garde in people such as John Cage and Lou Harrison" thus had a profound and clearly long-lasting effect.

Previte's pieces were played on this, his second British visit as a leader, by his seven-piece, horn-led band known as Weather Clear, Track Fast. Although at times relying heavily on the improvising skills of his band members — particularly those of trombonist Curtis Hasselbring and

saxophonist/bass clarinetist Andrew d'Angelo — Previte's music differs from conventional jazz in its departure from the usual form of theme statement-solos-theme statement. It differs from rock not only in its instrumentation but also in its rhythmic adventurousness. Its extraordinary dynamic and textural range similarly distinguishes it from minimalism.

Thus one of his compositions might begin with electric bassist Lindsey Horner playing whistle over Previte's rattling conga drums, continue with a folkish skirl on bass clarinet and flute, and proceed by way of a call-and-response passage between alto and trombone on the one hand and trumpet on the other to a chattering percussive climax involving the entire septet playing assorted pieces of Previte's drumkit. Or — as in *Smack-dab* — it might simply set up a bustling rhythm over which Cuong Vu's trumpet slowly builds to a rousing climax. Or again — as in the encore, *To Air* — the entire band could end up humming a stately, anthemic melody before subsiding dramatically into a sudden close-harmony vocal ending.

If drawing from such a plethora of musical styles occasionally renders Previte's compositions a little bewildering, he can live with it: "Things just sail by in front of my nose: I watch them, and maybe I'll follow them a little bit. This is a wide world; I've no use for provincialism."

CHRIS PARKER

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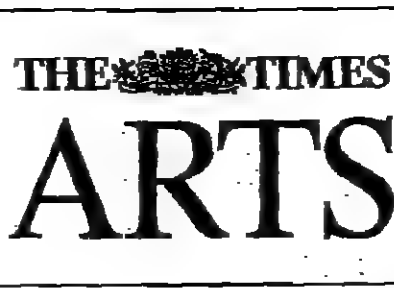
VENUE: Tonight at the Festival Hall



CHOICE 2

Actor of the moment, Ken Stott, stars in *Le Roi s'amuse*

VENUE: In preview from tomorrow, Olivier Theatre



THEATRE 1

Doris Day's reputation is done few favours by the anodyne new musical at the King's Head



THEATRE 2

The bed's the thing, it seems, as the RSC brings Vanbrugh's *The Relapse* to the Barbican

Whip crack away? No way

Back in 1924 a sunbeam fell in love with the Sugar Plum Fairy, and the result of their coupling was Doris Day. That was what I believed when I gurgled along with her songs in my playpen, and that is pretty much what I shall go on believing after seeing Leo P. Caruana and Patty Carver's tribute to the lady. Certainly, their show is not aimed at anyone hoping to discover a Doris who kneecaps her rivals or firebombs Welcome Wagons, or does anything odd and original. This is Doris Day, not the fiery amazon



The world they evoke is one in which you walk down the street smiling at folks who smile at you, fun means having a chocolate sundae on Saturday night, and a kiss at the door leads irretrievably to marriage

Definitely Doris King's Head, NI

celebrated in a classic *Guardian* misprint, Doris Godunov. Actually, she was born Doris von Kappelhof in Cincinnati, a city famous for being Cincinnati. The two-woman, three-man cast interrupt the musical flow to confide her original identity to us, along with several even less interesting facts. The hair on her arms stands up when she hears a song she wants to sing. She collects brooms, although manifestly not to fly on. The only role she had played before becoming a film star was a duck in *Mother Goose*. She sometimes goes to bed covered in Vaseline. She believes in premeditation. She adores animals, especially dogs, who (a statement we must not examine too deeply) have taught her what she knows "about love, fundamental love".

She has also been married rather often, a fact over which the show's creators tactfully skim, lest it compromise her songs' propaganda for monogamy, not to say monotony. The world they evoke is one in which you walk down the street ("a great feeling") smiling at folks who smile at you, fun means having a chocolate sundae on Saturday night, a kiss at the door leads irretrievably to marriage, and love is "forever". True, that was the 1950s, or the 1960s for those who were very, very dim and living in suburban America—but, oh, for an hour of Pia!

I suspect others in the audience felt the same, for there was a cheer when Lori Halsey Fox injected a bit of

unDoris exasperation into the well-known number about the nice guy who pursues a good girl to the altar "like I knew he would". But the cast is considerably more into idiosyncrasy than into irony. They collectively sing to life the Day who enjoyed April in Paris, once had a secret love, cried "whip crack away" from a stagecoach, wanted to be a teacher's pet, got bewitched, bothered and bewildered, and, asked by some idiot whether there would be rainbows day after day, replied: "Che sera, sera!" When they get to a good number—

Love Me or Leave Me, for instance, or *Sentimental Journey*—the cast does full justice to it. The twin troubles are that too many songs seem dull and samey and that the prose between them is worse. There is, so to speak, plastic wood holding together the plastic wood. In particular, what's the point of giving so much airtime to fans who, on the evidence of their letters, stand in the same idiotic relation to Doris as Doris does to Kierkegaard?

We hear from twins who clean out their Doris Day Den three times a

week and from a stand-in-for-whom momentarily standing in for Doris's stand-in in the film *Romance on the High Seas* was "the most incredible experience of my entire life". It was, I think, during this last episode that I found myself wondering why four members of the cast were wearing blue shoes and the other black. I had, after all, to find some way of staying stimulated.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

A love of the bedroom

innocuous to notice. However, the bed is still in a position of prominence, reminding us that manoeuvring the opposite sex between the sheets is the main concern of almost everyone in this seamy William & Mary world. Either the union will bring with it a dowry, which is why Lord Foppington and his indignant brother, Young Fashion, are in pursuit of young Heyden. Or it satisfies the lust to take someone's wife or husband away from the married partner.

In Vanbrugh's text only one scene undoubtedly takes place in a bedroom, but Judge

somewhere near his Amanda's thigh, and the words take on a less innocent meaning. However, in later scenes Judge's judgment is at fault when male visitors are brought into a bedroom where the women are *en deshabille*. Pushing the virtuous Amanda on to her bed, Michael Gardiner's worthy al but rapes her, and yet, surprisingly, the vibrant murmur in Kate Duchene's protest does make one believe she has the power to recall him to honour.

Victor Spinetti, sporting a pertwig as large as a newly

killed sheep, is good at showing Lord Foppington's determined dignity, soaring above mishaps that would send lesser men into a hernia, but he doesn't look as though he honestly wants the women he ogles. His great love is himself but this does not prevent him from lusting after the women, and we should feel this is so.

The production, sponsored by Allied Domecq, is nothing truly extraordinary but it has its pleasures, notably Lorraine Ashbourne's deliciously funny Heyden, in whose uninhibited arm-waving society manners have no hope of triumphing over sexual excitement.

JEREMY KINGSTON

LONDON

BURTWISTLE IN BULK The Secret Theatres celebration of Sir Harrison Birtwistle begins today with a concert staged performance of the monumental lynch opera *The Mask of Orpheus* (7pm). Andrew Davis conducts the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the cast includes Jon Garmon, Joan Rigby, Anna-Maria Owens and Alan Opat. Other evening events include a radio 3 broadcast of *In Tune* (6.15pm) and a music theatre performance, inspired by *The Mask*, from students of North Westminster Community School and members of the BBCSO (8.45pm). South Bank, SE1 (0171-980 4342). Tonight-May 4.

THE PRINCE'S PLAY Ken Stott plays the Reginald role in Victor Hugo's *Le Roi s'amuse* transposed to Victorian London by Tony Harrison, with the Prince of Wales as the cool philosopher Richard Eyre directs. National (Oxford), South Bank, SE1 (0171-980 4342). Preview begins tomorrow 8pm. Then April 16-18, 7.15pm; April 19, 12.15pm.

INVESTMENTS AT THE BARBICAN The fourth annual Contemporary Prix show opens a busy weekend here, followed by the first concert in a Shakespearian Symphony Weekend from the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra. Brass Without Strings is the theme of tomorrow's midweek, with Michael Tilson Thomas, saving the conductors for the

WEEKEND CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Gillian Mazey

LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA and the National Youth Brass Band of Great Britain, and Lady Solti the conductor. Barbican, St. Street, EC2 (0171-638 8801).

ELSEWHERE **CRISTIAN MARIU** Arny Shropshire begins a weekend programme at 10.15, with the group Small Co-Motion and the Begon Big Band. Stephens, 10, Great Newport Street, WC2 (0171-980 4342).

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LONDON GALLERIES

British Museum Cleyo and Kyo paintings, first week (0171-638 8801). **Courtyard** Drawings by Thomas Gainsborough (0171-638 8801). **Landscape House** 14 Home with Lord Leighton (0171-638 8801). **Old Master Paintings** from the 17th and 18th centuries (0171-638 8801). **Wellington** Portrait of the Duke of Wellington (0171-638 8801). **Wellington** Portrait of the Duke of Wellington (0171-638 8801).

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THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre shows in London

House full, returns only
Seats at all prices

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conflicts in the form of a priority reunion between two lovers. Wynne's, Charing Cross Road, WC2 (0171-389 1736). Mon-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 3pm.

TOAST Huge impressive staging at the National Theatre's apothecary to the world. Shaftesbury, Shaftesbury Avenue, WC2 (0171-379 5033). Mon-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 3pm.

THESE ARE MY PEOPLE The 12 actors include Peter Vaughan, Timothy West and Kevin Whately, and Harold Pinter directs. Reginald Rose's 1958 celebrated jury-room drama. Comedy. Shaftesbury, Shaftesbury Avenue, WC2 (0171-379 5033). Mon-Sat, 8pm; Sun, 3pm.

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THIS production divided my colleagues when it opened last year's season at the Swan in Stratford, persuading one of them that Ian Judge's direction was "wittily knowing" while another dismissed it as "deeply ordinary". I am in the former camp myself, although there are times when the wit, if not the knowingness, goes into hiding for a while and I caught myself counting the candles: sure sign that impatience is beginning to climb.

Three of the chief parts have been recast for the transfer, and some other changes may have occurred, almost certainly to Jonathan Goldstein's music, which caused some annoyance a year ago but now seems too



POP 1
Former hellraiser Paul Westerberg now has a taste for nothing more life-threatening than a good cigar



POP 2
Simple emotions, simply expressed: you can't beat the schmaltzy ballads of the ever poised Lionel Richie



POP 3
Cocteau Twins maintain their mystique on *Milk & Kisses*, an album that inhabits a world of its own



POP 4
The Beloved continue to peddle their shallow brand of blissed-out dance music on their latest, *X*

Too fast to live, too old to die

David Sinclair talks to rehabilitated rock 'n' roller Paul Westerberg about drugs, death, hellraising and the joys of a quiet evening in

Rock stars do not often break down and cry in interviews with journalists they have never met before. And Paul Westerberg, one of the most noted hellraisers of his generation, is the last person you would imagine to be an exception. Leader of the enormously influential and perpetually under-the-influence American group the Replacements from 1979 to 1990, Westerberg has lived the swaggering, staggering, rock 'n' roll life-style to the hilt. Now, on the eve of the release of his second solo album, *Evening*, he is a sober, 36-year-old man with a taste for nothing more life-threatening than French cigars. He is, however, still counting the cost of his former band's excesses, specifically the drug-related death in February 1995 of guitarist Bob Stinson.

"I knew this would happen sooner or later," he says, jaw quivering as he removes his shades for the first time during our interview, and wipes the tears from his eyes with the sleeve of his black suit. "I've been able to keep the lid on it until now, but..."

"Go back and look at some of the press before he died and I remember a quote which said, 'What's supposed to happen is that one of us dies because that's what they want' and that's what they did want. We all knew that Bob was on the highway to hell. Even before we split up, he was out of the band through drug abuse that was even beyond what the rest of us were doing. He was not a stable man. He needed help and he never really got what he needed."

Westerberg has written a song for his lost friend, a desperately poignant ballad called *Good Day* with a chorus that goes, "A good day is any day that you're alive."

"I never thought I would make a statement like that, but we change. I don't look forward to playing it

Rock is vaudeville: they pay money and you play the fool

live," he says, recovering his composure at last, and even raising a wan smile.

Good Day is one of 12 new compositions on *Evening* that confirm Westerberg's enduring status as one of the great, unrecognised heroes of rock 'n' roll. His writing style combines poetic intimacy and humour with an authoritative, rhythmic cool in a way that recalls the work of greats such as Ray Davies and Keith Richards. The new album is a mellower and more rounded collection than his sensational debut, *14 Songs*, released in 1993, although tracks such as *Ain't Got Me* and *Had It With You* recall the raucous spirit of old.

"I was very relaxed about the writing and the pace at which I recorded this album, and I think that's reflected in the songs. And I chose a batch of songs that all felt the same way. I wanted to make this album easier and more accessible than *14 Songs*."

If Westerberg is now actively looking for a taste of commercial success, you can hardly blame him. After all, he has been knocking on the door for 16 years. Born in the last few hours of 1959, and brought up in Minneapolis, he came from a large family that numbered both musicians and alcoholics among its ranks, which may explain the young Westerberg's passion for both music and booze. He was never pushed to be a high achiever, which he now believes made him try all the harder to make something special of his life.

The Replacements sprang out of the same Minneapolis hardcore punk scene that spawned Hüsker Dü, another of the great, unsung influences on latterday American rock, and later, *Soul Asylum*. Taking their cue from the New York Dolls, the Mats (as the Replacements were known) became renowned for their raucous,



Grown up all right: Paul Westerberg, hunched against the cold and the vicissitudes of life, keeps his shades on — "All I wanted to do was play rock 'n' roll, but I've grown a little tired of it"

ragged brand of garage-band rock and notorious for their royally drunken displays of craziness on and off stage. But thanks to Westerberg's exceptional ear for a tune — which eventually produced gems such as *Left of the Dial*, *I'll Be You*, *Skyway* and *Alex Chilton* — they always seemed to promise so much more.

"Around the time of the fourth album, *Let It Be*, things were really rolling. Everyone was saying we were headed for the top. For a while we were the coolest band in America. We thought, 'We're going to be rich in a couple of years', and then two years later the crowds are thinning out and you suddenly realise that that was your heyday."

In fact the Replacements' most successful album was *Don't Tell a*

Soul, released in 1989, which sold about 350,000 copies. But by then the combination of hard slog and even harder partying over so many years had taken its toll.

"We could have been millionaires and we would still have been sick of each other. We played our last gig on July 4, and it just dawned on everyone. Yeah, I guess we're done, aren't we?"

It is a cautionary tale and one that Westerberg admits he is lucky to be around to tell. He lives quietly now and spends most of his evenings reading.

"Everyone knows it takes a lot to get me out. What do you do when you go to a club? If you're not going to pick up a girl or get drunk, it cuts down the fun, really."

So is rock 'n' roll — as Ian

Hunter so memorably expressed it in his valedictory song *Ballad of Ador* — a losers' game?

"It depends what you want out of it. If you want people to admire you and you want to get laid and make money, you can do all that. But if you want to touch people, it's harder to do."

"Performing rock 'n' roll is just vaudeville: they pay money and you play the fool. All my early life all I wanted to do was play rock 'n' roll, but I've grown a little tired of it. Why can't you play rock 'n' roll on Friday night and go out to dinner with your family on Saturday night? I can play the music but I don't have to live the lifestyle any more."

● Eventually released by Warner Bros on April 29

The white heat of technophobia

Strangelove are a band with a future. Which is great for their lead singer Patrick Duff, a man with quite a past

Patrick Duff, on stage, exudes the kind of electricity that the black-browed Paganini was supposed to have generated, but with a noncy violin rather than huge, grating Stratoasters and the death-rumble of overloading bass. When Duff snaps "How could I possibly explain/My hatred of you", he shines with a malice that dims the spotlight on him. When he convulses against his guitar, the first 20 rows swoon. When my sister made momentary eye-contact with him backstage last year, she almost fainted, and spent the rest of the evening with her pupils wildly dilated, whispering "He looked at me... me!"

And rarely for something so bound up in the glory of the moment, his urgency travels on to record too. *Hysteria Unknown*, the second single from his band, Strangelove, is — and I know I am occasionally prone to exaggeration, but this is the simple, objective truth — one of the greatest singles ever recorded.

Three-and-a-half minutes of wildly spiralling guitars, uncomprehendingly passionate, painfully restless: finding momentary release in serried ranks of double-tracked Duffs repeating the words, "Hysteria unknown", as his primary vocals urgently cry, "Go anywhere/That's far away/Lie quietly down and die in shame", before launching themselves back into the confusion. *Hysteria Unknown* is an extra bonus B-side to Strangelove's new single, *Living with the Human Machines*. And it's not the best thing on there.

"Machines make me shudder. I can't be doing with them," Duff explains, twisting uneasily in his chair. "My flatmate has an answerphone, but I won't touch it. Computers — I'll never get my head around them. Imagine pouring what's in your mind into something plastic and metal — I find that vaguely revolting."

"I can't believe that people invite these contraptions into their houses. It's like trying to domesticate lions — they'll always be at odds with you, you can never tame them. Of course, I plug in my guitar to a machine,

and I sing into a machine, but at least there's something human there. I can mess it up, make it mine. Most humans are essentially lovely anyway — why try and keep us further apart with these electric partitions?" Duff shivers. "When you walk the streets, and start counting up the machines that surround you, you realise technology — steel and nickel and alloy and wire and electricity — outnumber humans by ten to one."

"The world's gradually becoming binary, black and white — we're eradicating doubt and areas of leniency. It's all either fact or fiction, true or false. And humans thrive on the unexplained; the gaps that you can fill with unclassifiable things like song, prose, poetry, conversation and love. And when all those areas have been paved over and wired up, humanity will disappear." This revision translates to the single, a Nick Cave-esque plea to the skies with a needling violin that puts the teeth on edge as Duff hollers his despair and doubt.

Patrick has had a lot of time to ponder humanity's folly — spending ten weeks in rehab, away from televisions, newspapers, books, friends and music tends to concentrate the mind wonderfully. "I was, am, an alcoholic. Since I went to rehab I feel like I've been reborn — but not in that horrible New Age Californian way. It's like I'm doing everything for the first time."

"Half of me wanted to show off, wanted to perform, wanted to be famous — and the other half thought that was immoral. So I drank. If I was drunk, that was an excuse, a reason for being like I was. Now I have no excuses — everything I do is because I want to. I have to take responsibility for my actions. But it's cool."

"It's like living your life twice, as different people. I've been the drunken, obnoxious Patrick. And now I get to do my life again as the sober, reasoned Patrick."

● The single, *Living with the Human Machines*, is out now on Food Records. The album, *Love and Other Demons*, follows in June



CAITLIN MORAN

NEW ALBUMS: Lionel Richie steers a course through familiar waters after a decade on the beach

The Commodore gets a bit wet

LIONEL RICHIE
Louder than Words (Mercury 532 241)
IT has been ten years since Lionel Richie's last new album, *Dancing on the Ceiling*, a leisurely rate of output even for a former Motown superstar. But, unlike the comparably sporadic releases of Stevie Wonder and Michael Jackson, *Louder than Words* arrives without fuss or fanfare, confirming Richie's curiously undervalued status among the heavy hitters of black American pop.

A performer who habitually plays well within his game, Richie continues to write and perform songs that deal in simple emotions simply expressed. Most levels of meaning within his lyrics can be gleaned from the titles alone — *Can't Get Over You*, *Don't Wanna Lose You*, *Now You're Gone*, *Still in Love* — and there is a gentle but persistent bias in favour of safe, schmaltzy ballads.

But it is when Richie attempts something a little more adventurous — such as the strangely aching vocal and crazy funk bass line of *Change* or the high-rolling jazz swing of *Lovers at First Sight* — that you get a tantalising glimpse of what the man is truly capable.



Lionel Richie: no jokes about him being a shadow of his former self, please

THE WALKABOUTS
Devil's Road (Virgin 724384134921)
CONVENED in Seattle 12 years ago and signed to the Sub Pop label for six years, the Walkabouts nevertheless seem to have been completely unaffected by the rise and fall of grunge. Their music is rooted in the baroque, story-telling tradition of Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds, and it is no coincidence that *Devil's Road* was produced by the Australian Victor Van Vugt, best known for his work with Cave.

The songs, all written by Chris Eckman, are peopled with drifters and desperadoes and often conjure a sense of earnest wonder: "Even the mightiest of rivers will bend/Before they vanish in the sand". Conventional rock band instrumentation is augmented by violin and pedal steel, while much of the

album's doomy grandeur derives from Mark Nichols's dramatic string arrangements, performed by the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra.

The singing duties are divided between Eckman (a deep, Cave-man growl) and Carla Torgerson (a contrastingly high, frosty tone), and since the two hardly ever feature on the same song together it feels, at times, as if there is a tug of war going on over the album's soul.

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TOP TEN ALBUMS

1. Greatest Hits	Take That (RCA)
2. What's the Story? Morning Glory?	Oasis (Creation)
3. Falling into You	Celine Dion (Epic)
4. Jagged Little Pill	Alanis Morissette (Maverick)
5. Wildcat Dreams	Tina Turner (Parlophone)
6. Blaze of Glory I & II	M People (Deconstruction)
7. Mike & the Mechanics	Mike & the Mechanics (Virgin)
8. Mosaic Shifts	Ocean Colour Scene (NCA)
9. Different Class	Pulp (Island)
10. Garbage	Garbage (Mushroom)

THE BELOVED
X (East West 0630-13316)
THE husband and wife duo of Jon and Helena Marsh, better known as the Beloved, carry on peddling a peculiarly shallow brand of blissed-out dance music on the enigmatically titled *X*. The formula depends on synthesized chord sequences and effects, a mechanised beat and intermittent bouts of low-key stage whispering by Jon. The result is songs of limited melodic and rhythmic invention and lyrics that are simple-minded, at best.

Without the visual distraction of all those naked bodies on the video of *Satellite*, the track fails to sustain interest in its thumping house beat and pseudo-gospel chants. And, while there are more imaginatively syncretised numbers, notably *Missing You*, and an intriguingly cool shuffle on the off-beat called *Three Steps to Heaven*, it is not enough to make the pudding rise.

COCTEAU TWINS
Milk & Kisses (Fontana/Mercury 514 501)
THE Twins have often been imitated but could never be mistaken for anyone else. From the echoing, opening chords of *Violaine* to the majestic, drifting finale of *Seekers Who Are Lovers*, their new album inhabits a musical world of its own.

For a group who have been together for 14 years, they have surrendered surprisingly little of their mystique. True to form, the abstract cover artwork of *Milk & Kisses* gives away little beyond a list of impenetrable titles including *Rilkean Heart*, *Tishbite*, *Eperdu* and *Calfskin Smack*, while Liz Frazer continues to use her tremulous soprano to skip and skate across the melodies, forming delicate clusters of syllables with no discernible meaning.

There are some lovely tunes, and the arrangements are more firmly and finely structured than has often been the case in the past. But for all their fragile beauty the songs evoke little more than a creeping sense of déjà vu.

CASSANDRA wilson

"A vocalist so good it's hard to believe she really exists."
— Independent on Sunday

"Outstanding"
— The Wire

"...amazing American vocalist... transforming material by U2 and Neil Young into music they could only have dreamed of. Unmissable."
— Time Out

"...one of the most breathtaking voices of the 1990s."
— Observer

Experience the voice of Cassandra Wilson on her new album *New Moon Daughter*

spellbinding collection of pop, blues, roots & jazz

CD available now on

DAVID SINCLAIR

EDUCATION

McDonald's grammar school

The ITV newsreader Trevor McDonald tells David Charter why he wants to persuade people to stop grunting and to learn to speak the Queen's English

Good English is a matter of pride for Trevor McDonald. His mission is to inspire a similar emotion in a generation dismissed as "grunters" by Gillian Shephard, the Education and Employment Secretary, because of their poor communication skills.

Mr McDonald's assured stewardship of ITV's *News At Ten*, precise pronunciation and obvious love of the language made him a popular choice as chairman of the Better English Campaign, which will be unveiled on Monday after several months of behind-the-scenes preparations. He says that it will not be a spectacular launch.

The campaign has a slogan: language is power. It has a bundle of good ideas. But because the Department for Education and Employment gave it virtually no resources, apart from a skeleton staff seconded from Whitehall, there will, for the moment, be more plans than actual projects.

Valuable links have been forged with organisations such as the CBI, Community Service Volunteers and the Newspaper Society; but more will be needed to put ideas into action. Nevertheless, the initiatives already outlined in advance seem to have great potential.

Local radio, newspapers and magazines have pledged to run material aimed at youngsters to encourage better communication. Some high-profile writers and poets will help to take the message directly to teenagers.

And a pilot scheme to link schools by cable for video-conferencing is being prepared.

"At this stage," Mr McDonald says, "we want to give people some idea of what we are working on, and we are trying to make the kind of splash which will get more of the people we are trying to attract to support us." He says the campaign's fundamental aim is to improve spoken and written English among the younger generation. They have to realise that their quality of life and prospects can be enhanced by better communication.

"I find it a little strange that everybody else in the world seems to have realised this," he says. "English is not only the international language of commerce but it is a form of communication which can enhance one's personal status in life. People who turn up for jobs need to be able to convince an employer that they can communicate effectively or they will not get the job."

Despite the strong steer that the campaign has been given by industry to direct its efforts towards the needs of the labour market, Mr McDonald hopes that some of his own pleasure in language will rub off on others. He

calls his vision "grand and basic". He adds: "The campaign is also to promote the enjoyment of the wonderful richness and variety of the English language that has been used so effectively by so many people over the years to convey so many different emotions and touch people in so many different ways. But I must confess that does come a little way down the line. Long before you get to that, you have to make people aware that it is a tool. It can be made to work for them; they can use it to their advantage."

There has been no clearer indication of plummeting standards in formal English than recent research by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate comparing English O-level scripts from 1980 and GCSE papers from 1993 and 1994. The later examinations showed three times as many spelling errors, a narrowing of vocabulary and a sixfold increase in the use of non-standard English.

Mr McDonald carefully steers clear of blaming this deterioration on the education system in general or modern teaching methods in particular. "I am not an expert in why it has declined. I just want to say it is about time we began focusing on this."

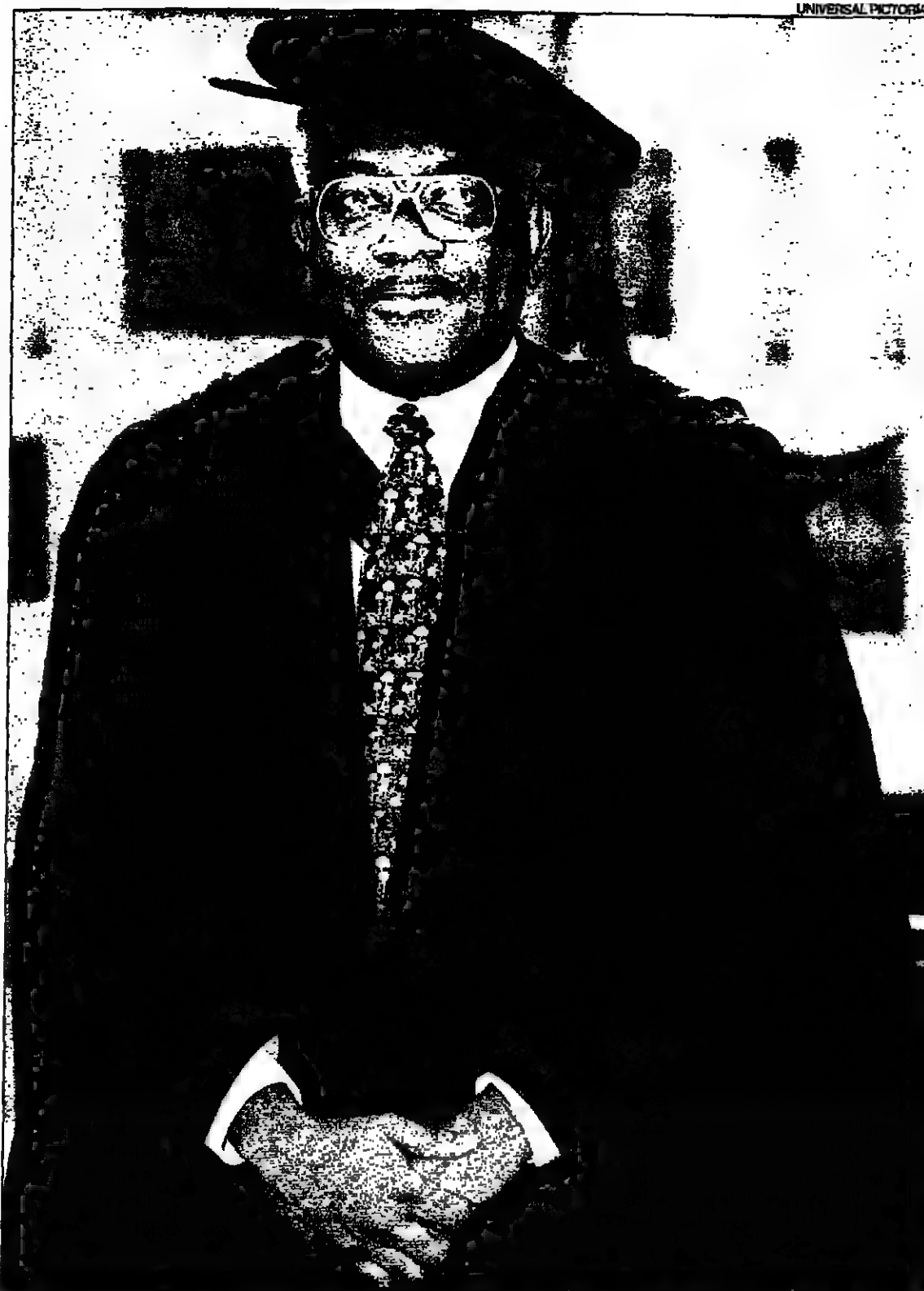
One possible reason he suggests for lower standards is the tendency to use "a kind of shorthand in modern society", which has limited the effective use of language. This is a clear echo of the "communication by grunt" which Mrs Shephard targeted when she set up the Campaign for Better English under Mr McDonald's stewardship.

To cheer at the Tory party conference in 1994, Mrs Shephard denounced "Estuary English" and pledged to restore the standard of spoken and written language. Nothing happened until the next year's conference, when the campaign was announced.

But Mr McDonald is adamant that the campaign should not be about forcing everyone to speak like him, or even like the Education Secretary. He explains: "We will try to make people aware that they can keep their shorthand language for their friends and their social groups, but they should know that there is something else. There is another way of deploying language in your favour. And we are saying that is the way to a kind of success."

"We are not trying to cut out people's regional accents or make them speak like anybody in particular. But people who cannot use English effectively might well find themselves left behind."

Mr McDonald's interest is personal as well as professional. "I do think it is rather sad that some people don't



Trevor McDonald: "People need to be able to convince an employer that they can communicate effectively"

use the language as effectively as I learnt to use it. It should be fun."

His own love of language comes from a strong early commitment to broadcasting, literature and learning. He perfected his English by imitating announcers on the BBC World Service while listening as a child in his native Trinidad.

A key factor in his own success has clearly been a tremendous fascination with English and a burning ambition. But if the campaign is to succeed, it has to reach the disaffected youngsters that Mrs Shephard had in mind when she targeted grunners.

Mr McDonald believes that the key is not to preach but simply to emphasise self-interest. Language

has to be seen as a route to a better life. "It is not important for anybody in society that they do well," he says; "it is important for them that they do well."

Local radio stations that young people hear and magazines they read have been enlisted to help to spread the message. "One of the things I am particularly keen about is trying to get more writers and poets into schools. It is not a brand new idea but we want to expand the existing scheme. If we get the money,"

Again self-interest is the key. "It will be nice to show people, even those who are not so well motivated,

that there are people who make a living by words and by expression. "If they can rub shoulders with these people and talk to them, one hopes something will brush off," says Mr McDonald. The campaign is all about slowly building up awareness."

Mr McDonald believes he is in for a long campaign and no goals or deadlines have yet been set, apart from stimulating new excitement about English.

"The contrary, that we are ashamed of our language, is too horrible to contemplate," he adds. "It is a language which everybody else is using and we should use it with pride."

No cause for alarm when an inspector calls

David Tytler responds to unions' fears at this week's conferences

Within the next two weeks, school inspections start again. Teachers preparing for the visits will be worrying about the four or five days of relentless observation. Inspectors will be looking at new guidelines which come into effect this term.

Those guidelines, which require registered inspectors to name poor teachers, plus the views of Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector who claims that there are 15,000 of them, have been at the heart of the complaints aired at the teaching union conferences.

Ofsted, the Office for Standards in Education, has become the new hate figure in union demonology. It is attacked for being too expensive and damaging to schools; all stick and no carrot, to quote Doug McAvoy, the general secretary of the National Union of Teachers.

As someone who has been on a number of inspections since the system began in September 1993, I do not recognise the wilder claims that all inspection teams are only interested in the bad, the poor, the unsatisfactory. There is nothing an inspector likes more than to be able to report that a school is good or has outstanding features. If there are shortcomings, however, it is only right that they are exposed. Schools are there for the benefit of pupils, not teachers; they should be accountable to parents and the community they serve.

Inspectors, too, should be accountable. Through the record of inspection of evidence, with its lesson observation forms and notes of interviews, they are. Properly followed, the system is thorough and consistent. In judging the quality of teaching, the criteria include subject knowledge, the way the class is motivated and controlled, the expectations the teacher has of pupils.

None of this should come as a surprise when the inspection starts. Until Ofsted, schools did not know on what basis they

were being judged, they had little time to prepare for the inspection. They now perhaps have too much time.

One of the most unpleasant and difficult tasks imaginable is to sit with a well-meaning man or woman and say, in essence, that the past 15 or more years of his or her professional life have been a waste of time, that the school is failing, or, to use the euphemism, in need of special measures.

These judgments are not arrived at lightly. The initial Ofsted judgments are then checked in a follow-up visit by Her Majesty's Inspectors who have reversed the decision in only a handful of cases.

The vast majority of schools are doing a reasonable job, some a very good job, but in many there are teachers who are not performing well, who will score six or seven on the new seven-point scale.

Where more than half of the lessons of one teacher, who has to be seen at least twice, hit the bottom scores, a confidential report naming the teacher has to be given to both the head and the teacher concerned. It is not published in the final report. It does not automatically mean that the teacher will be sacked. Extra help and training might well put the matter right. In reality, it is unlikely that there will be a rash of named teachers in fear of their livelihood.

Inspection does improve standards, not least because even before the inspectors arrive the school will have reviewed its policies and procedures. Even the best schools, and there are many, benefit from regular review.

Ofsted is expensive and the whole system is to be reviewed, but it would be a mistake to abandon the notion of regular and professional inspection and return to the haphazard system that left many schools unaccountable. Does anyone, other than a few union activists, want that?

● The author is a lay inspector.

Writers and poets will help to take the message directly to teenagers

Mrs Shephard targeted when she set up the Campaign for Better English under Mr McDonald's stewardship.

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Mr McDonald's interest is personal as well as professional. "I do think it is rather sad that some people don't

Stephen Court talks to university teachers about the pressures they face from bureaucracy and student numbers

Classics lecturer Mike Edwards misses lunch most days. It is not that he thinks lunch is for wimps, but with a heavy load of teaching and administration, and a stream of students coming to see him about their work, he simply cannot find the time.

"I'm not the sort of person who will lock the door. I will sit and talk to students. In term-time, that means I usually won't have lunch," he says. Dr Edwards, who teaches at Queen Mary and Westfield College in the University of London, works at least 50 hours a week during term-time. Time spent on research has to be squeezed in elsewhere.

The pressure is not just on time. Dr Edwards has been at Queen Mary and Westfield College since 1983. Five years ago, there were about a dozen students in classes in the English department. Now his class sizes have shot up to 50.

"We have seminars with 30

This is no time to be a don

people in a room. The amount of discussion is really limited," he says. "I have to mark about 100 essays in two weeks. I find that hard to cope with. I can't discuss the essays fully with the students."

The experience of Dr Edwards bears out the effect on academic staff of the rapid growth in higher education. Between 1984 and 1994, student numbers increased by 65 per cent, but academic staff rose by only 11 per cent. A survey carried out in 1994 by the Association of University Teachers found that, on average, academics worked 55 hours a week in term-time, and 51 hours a week in vacations.

A third of their time during the term was taken up by administration — more than was spent on teaching undergraduates (29 per cent), or



Dr Andy Baker, left, says that research is marginalised

research (54 per cent). In 1992, only 11 per cent of academics' time went on administration.

One of the factors which has led to paperwork dominating dons' timetables was the start

in 1993 of the funding council assessment of university teaching. Ruth Levitas, a sociology lecturer at the University of Bristol, found she was putting in long hours when her department was assessed.

"Last September and October I worked about 60 to 70 hours a week for nearly four weeks, almost entirely preparing documentation in the run-up to the assessment," she says.

The past decade has also seen the introduction of research assessment, which is based on the quality and quantity of publications by academics. The assessment results determine the allocation of the bulk of research cash from the funding council. Over the past term, academics have been preparing for the fourth round of assessment, which starts at the end of this month. For Dr Levitas, this has been an extra headache.

"The exercise means more administration, and a huge pressure on teaching because of the amount of research we have to produce."

Andy Baker, a physicist at the University of Bath, finds juggling teaching, research and administration a difficult act. He says: "This term I have two days a week clear for research, but last term I didn't have a single day without teaching commitments."

"Things are changing so rapidly in the sector — it's very unusual to teach the same course for two years. This means research is often marginalised to the vacations."

For university teachers such as Mike Edwards, Ruth Levitas and Dr Baker, and many others, there is still much in their work — particularly research and teaching — which they find rewarding. But the job has changed dramatically since they started their careers.

"I still enjoy being an academic," says Mike Edwards. "But I would have grave reservations about recommending it to anyone now as a career."

Setting standards to root out the rogues

More than 600,000 students come to Britain each year to learn English.

John O'Leary reports on moves to safeguard a £700 million industry

FINDING a language course has never been difficult in Britain. Thousands of students cross the Channel each summer to learn English and, despite the traditional British reluctance to master other tongues, growing numbers of students in universities and adult education centres are making an attempt.

The problem, especially for continental visitors, has always been to judge the quality of the countless courses on offer. There are annual horror stories about rogue language schools, which tarnish the good name of others in the sector.

Next week, however, the

three English language associations are banding together to find a solution in the form of a single accreditation scheme. The aim is to give foreign applicants a simple and reliable guarantee of quality without submerging the colleges in bureaucracy.

With 616,000 students coming to Britain each year to learn the language, training has become a huge industry, bringing in an estimated £700 million a year. There is no government regulation, so the

British Council and the two associations representing the public and private sectors have stepped in to fill the breach.

The council has managed separate schemes for the two associations since the 1980s, but now one accreditation system will cover schools, colleges and universities that teach English and a foreign language. Institutions will be inspected on a three-year cycle, with spot-checks between formal visits.

At present, 320 of the estimated 1,000 centres operating during the summer peak are accredited. The signs are that the proportion will grow with a more prestigious, better-known scheme, especially since the new partnership will also promote accredited institutions through the British Council's worldwide network of offices.

Foreign language teachers have also been involved in a bout of soul-searching over the quality of courses. A

recent report by the London-based Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research found there were worrying variations in the quality of courses in universities, most of which now offer language courses to all students and not just those taking specialist degrees in the subjects.

The enthusiastic take-up is placing a strain on language departments, most of which have received little extra funding to offer an expanded

service. Universities have been increasing their use of computerised packages and video programmes to supplement individual teaching.

The 800 members of the Association for Language Learning, who attended their annual conference at Exeter University earlier this month, called for a more coherent national policy covering all age groups. The association is worried that languages were downgraded beyond the age of 14 in the review of the national curriculum when the CBI and the Department of Trade and Industry are emphasising their importance in economic terms.

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Unknown veteran makes confident start to first Masters challenge

Dougherty soaks up the Augusta atmosphere



ANDREW LONGMORE
At Augusta

As Ed Dougherty stood on the 1st tee at the Masters yesterday morning, the sunlight breaking through the air still chill, John O'Connor was praying for one more good shot. Just for old time's sake, for the sake of all those hours trudging round the Edmont course together and the 21 years it has taken his old friend to reach the lofty eminence of that 1st tee.

Dougherty, a smile of relief crossing his well-worn face, duly obliged, his drive soaring down the fairway to a position even the man himself never really believed he would find. At the age of 48, Dougherty has waited longer than most to make his debut among the rhododendrons and the cypress trees of the Augusta National and, he admitted earlier in the week, having

he later admitted, two holes later, he was two over par and beginning to wonder whether the whole thing, the round he had lived through in his imagination roughly every springtime, was not going to slip into embarrassment. Even when he made the putting green, the surface was quicker, more slippery, than he had anticipated. "Scariest than it was in practice," he said.

Perhaps Augusta's tradition, its companionship, its dubiousness and exclusivity, which can be both warming and intimidating but is unchangeable either way, was also a lonelier feeling than he had expected, something deeper than the mere mispronunciation of his name — it is Docherty, not Dowerly — which had nearly cost him his hotel booking at the start of the week.

'The thrill of being here. That's why this is so special'

of the week. Dougherty's sense of belonging had to be home-made, brought with him in the form of his wife, Carolyn, and men like O'Connor and Bill Payne, people with whom he shared a barbecue the previous evening and much of his well-patched life before that. "Hell," Payne said as he walked up the 18th, "we've walked a long way from where we came from."

In golfing terms, a brief moment at the head of the US PGA leaderboard — "they were just putting up the 'y' as they were taking down the 'd'," as he memorably put it at the time — brought one family connection no one could match. When Dougherty and Mike Furyk were in their twenties and assistant professionals at Edmont, they would shut up shop early to catch a final hole on the course before sundown. One evening, the call came through on the course that Furyk's wife had gone into labour. Some hours later, she produced Jim Furyk, who yesterday completed a circle of sorts by making his Masters

debut, at the age of 25. "When Jimmie came onto the circuit," Dougherty said. "That's when I began to feel really old."

As if advancing age was not enough to contend with, a long-standing neck injury, suffered while moving a pinball machine, has been causing Dougherty pain for some months now. Restoring pin-

ball machines is one of Dougherty's hobbies. Model trains is another, safer, one.

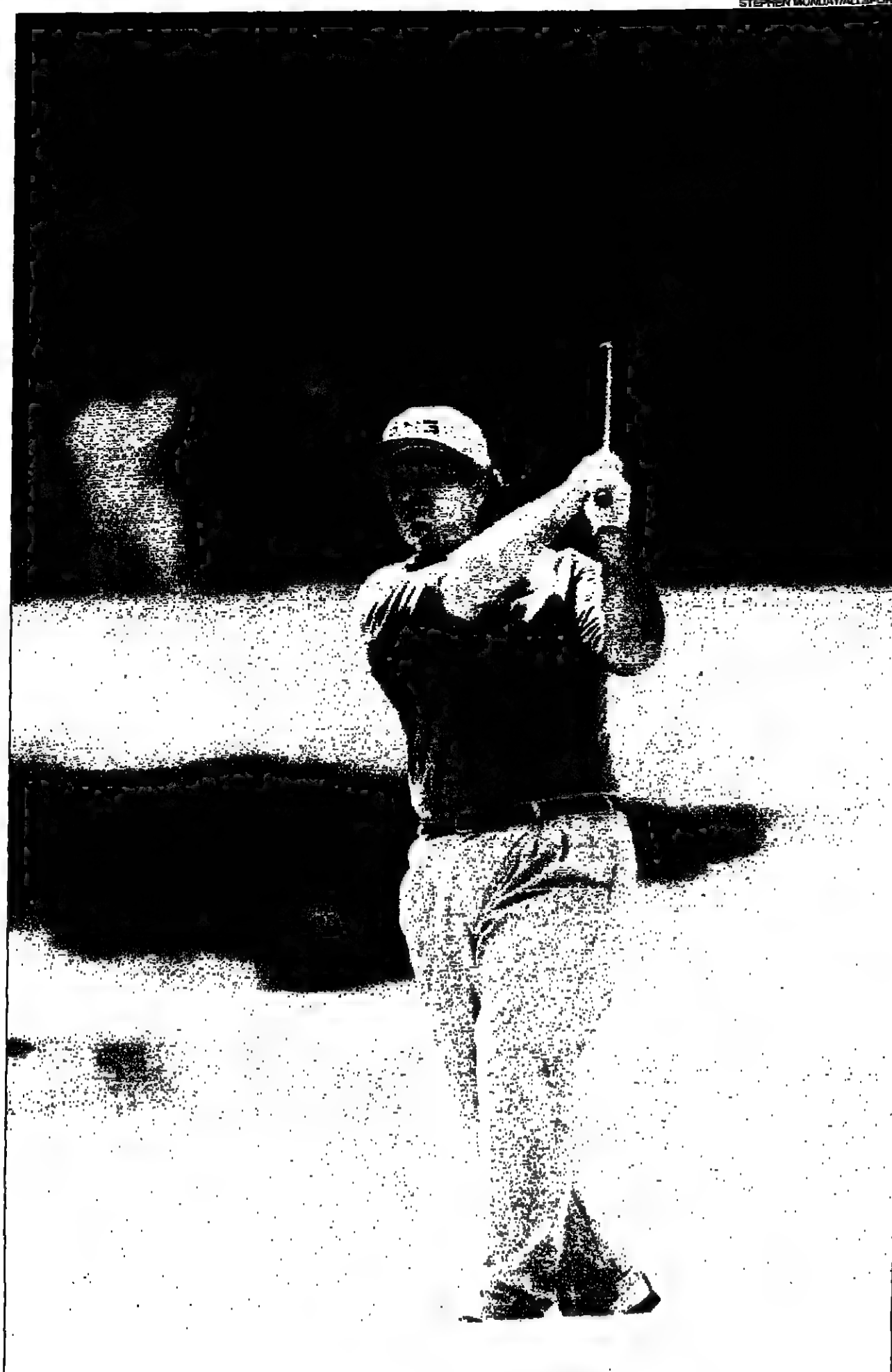
By rights, he should have had an operation done during the winter, but having qualified for the Masters by winning the Deposits Guarantee Golf Classic (such catchy titles) last season, he was not about to risk the accomplishment of his life merely through the

surgeon's knife. "I don't think I would be putting it off for anything else," he said.

It would be nice to report a happy ending to this story, but a double-bogey six on the last ruined an otherwise respectable round. A 76, four over par, still leaves Dougherty with a chance of making the last two days and his pitch into the bank at the side of the 6th,

which bobbled up and landed about two feet from the hole, was the shot of the day, though few saw it.

Even fewer will remember the Doughertys of this tournament come Sunday afternoon. "I guess the Masters has done quite well without me until now," he said. It will be all the richer for his presence this week, though.



Dougherty drives to the green at the 18th, completing his first round in the Masters at Augusta yesterday

Ford is left out in the cold after Warrington agree sale

BY CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

NOT only has Mike Ford been left out of Warrington's side for the visit of Halifax in the Super League tonight, the club has agreed a deal for the former Great Britain rugby league scrum half to join Wakefield Trinity. Ford, 30, has to confirm the move himself, but appears to have little option. Since leaving Castleford two years ago, not much has gone right for the former Wigan scrum half. A season with South Queensland Crushers failed to work out, while infrequent and indifferent displays have punctuated his short time at Widderpool.

John Dorahy, the Warrington coach, said: "Mike showed in our opening game, at Leeds, he is a tremendous competitor. Unfortunately for him, the club sees fit to let him go and perhaps the time is now right for a move. The final decision rests with Mike."

Ford's move to first-division Wakefield would keep him in good company, with Greg Mackay, whom Ford ousted at Warrington, enjoying a new lease of life alongside Garry Schofield at Huddersfield and Shane Cooper directing affairs behind the scrum at Widderpool.

Kelly Shefford takes over at scrum half for Warrington and Matsaki Mafi, of Tonga, and Gary Chambers are recalled at centre and prop forward, respectively, following Monday's defeat at Wigan.

Like Leeds, who yesterday announced the first of three overseas signings — Nathan Picchi, 21, a New Zealand loose forward, previously with Hawkes Bay — Halifax, surprisingly, are bumping along the bottom of the Super League without a win. They had chances to beat London Broncos and Oldham Bears and, abjectly, surrendered an 18-point lead to Castleford Tigers on Tuesday.

Halifax must do without Graeme Hallas, the wing, and Paul Anderson, a prop, who were given two-match bans by the Rugby Football League disciplinary committee last night. Hallas was cited by the League for a challenge on Rob Myler, the Oldham wing, who sustained a broken nose. Anderson was sent off in the same match for a dangerous tackle.

A one-match ban for Karl Fairbank has saved the Bradford Bulls forward from missing the Silk Cut Challenge Cup Final on April 27. His punishment for a high tackle at Sheffield means that he will be absent from the Wembley dress-rehearsal at St Helens on Sunday.

Disciplined style of rivals sets example to Britain

FROM NORMAN DE MESQUITA IN EINDHOVEN

A 6-5 DEFEAT by Latvia, one of the favourites to win pool B of the world ice hockey championships here, might have appeared a promising start for Great Britain, but the final game on the opening day of the tournament put that scoreline into perspective.

Belorussia beat Switzerland 4-2 in an outstanding game which was played at breath-taking pace and showed both teams to be highly skilled, as well as fast, fit and strong. Although the decisive goal came as the result of a goal-tending error, both goaltenders made many excellent saves and both teams were highly effective on the break.

When Great Britain led Latvia 5-5, the obvious tactics should have been to play tight and close down the opposition. But British ice hockey places too little emphasis on defence and it was only the fine performance of Stephen Foster in the Great Britain goal that restricted the Latvians to three further goals. Far too often in the later stages of the game, he was left exposed.

Another aspect of Britain's game that must be addressed is the lack of discipline that incurs so many penalties. Three of Latvia's goals were scored with a British player in the penalty box and, while there were one or two refereeing decisions that could have been questioned, the penalties were, on the whole, deserved.

The British players must realise that the excessively physical style of play that is tolerated in their domestic game is not acceptable in international competition.

Doug Mason, the Canadian-born coach of the Holland team, believes that this lack of discipline gives his team a realistic chance of beating Britain. "If the referee is on top of it," he said, "Britain could get so many penalties that we will be able to take advantage and beat them, as long as we keep our own discipline."

It must be hoped that the Great Britain coach, Peter Woods, who watched the game between Belorussia and Switzerland, learn from their physical but disciplined style.

After the Latvia game, Woods was critical of the officials. "The refereeing was a bit one-sided and the penalty which led to their winning goal was something of a mystery call," he said. "We had nine penalties while they had only two, and the refereeing was a major factor."

However, instead of querying the penalty decisions, Woods might be better served trying to prevent a repeat of the ill discipline which brought them about.

Pitch battle ends in time

FROM SYDNEY FRISKIN IN ATLANTA

THE numerous administrative problems that threatened the cancellation of the six nations' hockey tournament here were resolved late on Wednesday night and the event was due to get underway yesterday on the practice pitch at the Clarke University stadium. Workmen were busy putting the finishing touches to the stadium's main pitch, which will be ready for use tomorrow. Today is a rest day, which will enable the work to be completed in time.

Mark Whitney, the director of communications for the United States Field Hockey Association, said yesterday that British protests had abated after a work-out on the practice pitch. Britain had threatened to withdraw from the tournament.

The Clarke University stadium, which has a capacity of 5,000, will be one of two

venues used for the Olympic Games in July. A four nations' tournament for men and women was played here last August, but the main pitch was taken apart after complaints from participating teams and a ruling by the International Hockey Federation (FIH) that it would not be suitable for an Olympic tournament.

The original intention, Whitney explained, was to hold the six nations' tournament at the Morris Brown College stadium, where the main matches for men and women at the Olympic Games are to be played. "Construction delays forced us to abandon the idea of holding the six nations' tournament there and to switch it to the Clarke University premises, where we ran into further problems," Whitney said.

By the middle of last week, the organisers thought of call-

ing the whole thing off, but, with strong urgings by the FIH, they decided to make a special effort to hold the event. "The FIH had stressed that the participating teams were depending on the six nations' tournament for the final selection of their Olympic squads," Whitney said.

The tournament is expected to be in full swing tomorrow, when all the matches will be switched from the practice ground to the main pitch. Great Britain are due to play Pakistan and, on Sunday, will take on India, with whom they drew 3-3 in the qualifying tournament in Barcelona in January.

GREAT BRITAIN SQUAD: S Mason (Reading), D Luckie (East Grinstead), J Wyatt (Reading), J Halls (Old Loughborough), S Singh (Southgate), S Hallett (Hounslow), J Laidlaw (Reading), Kallie Talbot (Canmore), R Thompson (Hounslow), N Thompson (Old Loughborough), C Mayer (Canmore), S Fordham (Hounslow), R Garcia (Polo Club, Barcelona), J Shaw (Southgate), C Giles (Haverhill), M Peart (Reading).

Dutch warm up with comfortable victory

BY ALEX RAMSAY

CONCEDING five goals is hardly the best preparation for an international against Holland, but it is the best the Great Britain women's hockey team could manage yesterday at Bisham Abbey. The two sides met for a training match as part of the build-up for the televised encounter tomorrow, but the 5-2 scoreline would have done rather more for the Dutch morale.

Britain started enthusiastically, trying to break down a solid defence, but could not find a way through. The enthusiasm waned when they went a goal down, Steenberg hitting in from a penalty corner after 24 minutes. Ten minutes later, Holland showed how to slice through a lethargic defence, as Donners got the second.

Two goals in three minutes in the second half saw the

Dutch put paid to the British challenge. Lewin made it 3-0 with a stylish individual effort while Van der Wieler squeezed in the fourth after an error by Robb, in the Britain goal. The hosts made the score a little more respectable with a Fraser penalty corner and a Cook penalty stroke, but Holland's work was almost done. Just for good measure, Van der Wieler cracked in a fifth, with two minutes left.

Sue Slocombe, the Great Britain coach, had to admit that the Dutch had been "sharper and more clinical".

Despite the gloom at Bisham Abbey, celebrations are expected in Doncaster tomorrow. High town, the premier division leaders, have only to beat their Yorkshire hosts to win their first league title, having already won the European Cup Winners' Cup.

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The Heineken League first division in Wales is moving towards an exciting and wildly unpredictable climax. Neath occupy top position with 54 points; Pontypridd, six points behind, have a game in hand; Cardiff, with two games in hand, lie third with 47 points. Llanelli's chances look to have disappeared with their loss to Bridgend last Saturday ... yet, they have 46 points and a game advantage over the leaders. All is not entirely lost.

Normally, given these statistics, it would not be too presumptuous of Neath, with four games to play, to have their victory celebrations well under way — but this is not a normal season. It is not merely the two victory points that are at stake in each match, but there are bonus points available, too.

Last September, a two-tier points system was introduced to the Heineken League. As well as the points gained for

Hunt v to cha of faci big fi

Russell Kempson me
to swap Swindon Tow

WHEN Swindon Town secure the Endlesleigh Insurance League second division championship, probably, and Liverpool beat Manchester United to win the FA Cup final, possibly, Rikki Hunt will be with them in spirit. In body, protected by layers of insulated clothing, he will be thousands of miles away, hopefully receiving a similarly notable and noble success.

Hunt — director of football at Swindon, and fanatical follower of Liverpool — will be approaching the North Pole. In fact, he leaves for Canada today, and, by the time Swindon trot out at the County ground against Burnley on Wednesday, he should have taken off into the wild, white ocean. Weather permitting.

By the time Liverpool take on United at Wembley on May 11, he will be a speck on the frozen wastes; at last experiencing what months of training and acclimatisation had prepared him for. Why else would he spend a day in an industrial freezer at the midfield meat market?

"The first thing you notice is that your nostrils freeze up," Hunt, 42, said. "Fortunately, I prefer cold to heat. I'm not one for laying on the beach."

Though the former oil company executive — he was born in R. Hunt — has climbed Snowdon and Mont Blanc, he

winning a game, there were additional points awarded for the number of tries each side might score in a match. On a graded system, that allowed a point for three tries and another for five tries. Teams could accumulate, if they scored seven tries and more, a maximum of three extra points.

The Welsh Rugby Union thought such a system necessary because of the limited technical and tactical manifestations that inspired themselves on a weekly basis among the club's fixtures. Matches, if tense and full of furious commitment, were invariably of the grunting, muscular sort. Pinching the footballers' line, rugby players talked self-satisfyingly of the manner the game away "with a result" when they had the victor's two points in the bag. Such comment was often as predictable and colourless as the game they had played. This was increasingly disheartening

warms llenge ng the reeze


had never contemplated trekking 350 miles, for up to 40 days, in temperatures that would drop to minus 40. Not to mention invading the privacy of polar bears.

"I'm told they haven't got great eyesight. They think we're seals," he said. "If it's any consolation, once they've torn you to pieces they don't eat you because they don't like the taste. We'll be taking risks, but in case, but I hope we don't have to use them."

Hunt's Scotch humour will be much in demand when the 10-strong expedition - ten officers, including a cameraman, four professionals and two guides - departs from Resolute Bay, led by David Hempleman-Adams, the explorer. Negotiating players' contracts, signing-on fees and win bonuses, is easy; walk miles till the blizzard sets in, the supplies run low and the first signs of frostbite appear.

His adventures began when he met Hempleman-Adams at a prize-giving ceremony, discovered he was an armchair window supporter and invited him to a match. A bet was struck involving Snowdon, Mont Blanc followed, the pole, the co-ordinates of which - 78°5N, 104°29W - were engraved on Hunt's sub-conscious.

Hunt was selected from 500 applicants, hopes to raise



**GERA
DAVIN**
Rugby C

Tactics were based around too much kicking, while the interminable mauls were prominent, aggravating and frustrating. Rugby was played at a pedestrian pace, geared to the slowest thinker and runner rather than the swiftest. This applied not only to Wales.

Something needed to be done in order to raise the skillful qualities in a game, to encourage those aspects of rugby that prove more subtly appealing and to ensure that rugby rewarded initiative and not merely the imitative. Some stimulus was required.

If the motivation did not come from within the clubs — as it should have, but patently



Hunt gets into shape for


£20,000 for charity and has said £15,000 for the privilege of turning blue in front of an audience. It is the first time that such an adventure will be earned, by satellite, into the centrally heated sitting-rooms of England.

He dismisses suggestions of savourism. "It's a life-endangering thing, there's only a 50 per cent chance of success, so they're not going to take anybody just because they're a friend," he said. "It's going to be about endurance and a positive state of mind which,

COMMENTARY

lifetime of the Heineken League — then it might have to be imposed superficially from the outside. So the bonus system came into being. There have been cries that this is too artificial an inducement — it may be — but Wales might need this kind of thing in a way New Zealand and Australia naturally do not. They have a keener willingness to explore the possibilities within the laws and refine their skills accordingly, rather than negatively to exploit ways around them, or moan about them, which is this country's congenital problem.

Tries may not be the be-all and end-all of rugby, but they do indicate a more positive



is epic journey to the North

After all the tests we've been through, I think I've proved I have.

"I will be focusing on the finish line and drag my body to meet my brain. I'm excited, when perhaps I should be a bit more fearful, but we're going with very experienced people." Even a recently broken right hand, sustained when he was learning how to ski, has failed to dampen his enthusiasm.

Though on a year-long sabbatical from work, while he plots his next career move, Hunt maintains his manage-

game should be played. This has proved to be the case in Wales. So often this season, teams have played to the final whistle when, to all intent and purposes, the contest might well have been over long before. Teams are less likely to close up the game in the final minutes because of the availability of bonus points.

Twice in recent weeks, Neath, near half-time, have been losing by double figures yet by the end have gone on to accumulate the maximum number of points. They have already scored 94 tries compared with last year's 33. Pontypridd, Llanelly and Swansea have also scored more than last season, though Cardiff have not.

Admittedly, there have been ridiculous scores, Cardiff and Neath have each recently notched 95 points in one game. Embarrassing though this may be, it is nonetheless the kind of attitude top teams need

Expelled from school, he progressed from the local fruit market to night-shift self-stacker, from health food shop proprietor to oil baron. In 1993, in a Liverpool newspaper poll, he was voted one of the city's 100 Living Legends.

He has given a lecture,

	P	W	D	L	T	B	Ph
Neath	18	13	1	4	94	20	54
Ponynogwd	18	13	0	3	66	20	54
Cardiff	18	13	3	3	74	21	41
Llanelli	17	12	0	5	67	22	41
Swansea	19	10	0	9	71	19	36
Bridgend	19	10	0	9	57	16	26
Newport	18	10	1	7	37	8	36
Ebbw Vale	23	10	0	10	40	28	74
Tranmere	19	8	0	11	38	8	26
Tracy	18	5	0	13	34	7	11
Aberystwyth	20	2	0	5	18	37	7
Aberavon	19	2	0	12	27	4	4

There is, however, an inherent weakness in the present system. The bonus points should not, as they do, add up to more than the points gained for winning a game. The aim, after all, is to win and that this should count for less than the maximum bonus points is absurd. Although they lost by 95 points to Cardiff recently, Aberbryllyn still managed to collect two bonus points from

a team could, in effect, lose every match, yet, through the accumulation of tries, accrue 60 league points. This is more than Pontypridd, with 39 points, had in second position last year.

Theoretically, too, a team could win the championship without winning a game. This is an unlikely possibility, but such anomalies, however far-fetched, should be written out of the competition rules nevertheless.

At any rate, the system has provided such a grand finale to the championship, with such speculation and greater expectations, that there will be live television coverage in Wales. If Cardiff play Pontypridd on May 10, the championship title may not be settled until four days later, when the two final matches of the season will involve the four clubs that are at present in the top positions: Cardiff v Llanelli, Neath v Pontypridd. A fiction writer could not have

done better.

IAN STEWART



ears roaming the Arctic

and a lot of it is about challenging yourself. You don't have to do the daft things I'm doing but you should continually strive to do something more and not accept that where you are now is where you're going to be tomorrow.

"I don't really work. I'm a lazy person, but I find creative ways of getting people to do it for me." As Swindon make their final push for promotion, and Liverpool eye the FA Cup, he will be confronting the coldest of realities: he cannot delegate this job.

Chorley seek fitting reward for their revival in fortune

EIGHTEEN months ago, Dave Sutton was ready to turn his back on football. He had parted company with Rochdale United, after four years as manager and brought three successive car-misfires from a place in the Endsleigh Insurance League third division play-offs, and gone into partnership with his father selling building plants in Southport. Towards the end of last season, however, he was approached by Jack Kirkland, the chairman of a business consortium that had rescued Chorley from receivership. The potential of the UniBond League club was irresistible. Sutton's rebuilding has produced an early reward in the shape of an FA Umbro Trophy semi-final appearance, which sees Chorley travel to face Ross tomorrow to play at Seaford Town, the Sussex Conference champions, before hosting the second round at Victory Park next Saturday.

Chorley's best Trophy run started in the first qualifying round in October with a 2-1 victory at Atherton LR and is taken in nine matches so far, including successes over Preston United, Boreham Wood and Gateshead, of the Conference, who were beaten 4-1 in the quarter-finals.

Injuries have troubled a small squad and the Trophy is becoming a priority at the expense of a mid-table league season. Fit and firing on all cylinders, however, is the club partnership of Brian Lea Tripple and Ross.

Walter Gammie
looks at a club
enjoying a new
lease of life in the
FA Umbro Trophy

ne England semi-professional striker, was brought back to Chorley from Marine for £16,000 and Trundle signed from Burscough for £7,000. With Sutton not even having seen him play, The gamble as already paid off.

"I believe Trundle could be the first £1 million non-league player and that he will play for England," Sutton said. "His skills are unbelievable. It's just a privilege to own up and work with him. After two weeks, Bolton and Wottonham Forest wanted him down and Glasgow Rangers have recently been leading the queue."

It may be wise not to scoff at Sutton's seemingly inflated expectations. He has already led a youth-team striker in a deal that may bring Chorley £50,000. David Eatock, who had been working in a raphyard, went to Newcastle United in August for an initial fee of £25,000 — breaking the club record of £22,500 received for Paul Mariner from Plymouth Argyle in 1979.

"I don't know whether it's a ziness or what, but it amazes me that Football League clubs don't show more interest in non-League players," Sutton said. He hopes, however, to hang on to Trundle long

ough to be able to fulfil his plan to return Chorley to the Conference, in which they played from 1988-90, "in two years".

Kirkland, a consultant in the leisure industry, like Sutton, has found non-League football a revelation. A school-leaver of Tom Finney and a lifelong Preston North End devotee, he first saw Chorley play two years ago and became hooked.

"We've got a nice ground," he said. "We'll easily get it back up to Conference standard. It's got the potential to become a 12,000-seat stadium you never know." Chorley have bought the rugby league club that had been their tenants and look forward to year-round revenue.

Sutton knows it must work better than the experience he endured when Rochdale Hornets shared Spodilane. "Revenue has to be shared 45-45, with ten per cent going to the council," he said. "I'll never get anywhere at all there. There were two different offices, two different changing rooms and two different commercial affairs. It didn't really generate any profit." Under one roof, the prospects are far more promising.

The task tomorrow is to upset Macclesfield, whose manager, Sammy Mellroy, turned down the chance to succeed Sutton at Rochdale.

"We can keep them down to single figures in the first leg, we'll see what we can do in the second leg," he said.

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

This allegedly sporty vehicle is a non-starter

Reaching deep into that magic bottomless pot of critical enthusiasm I keep at my desk (cook, little pot, cook), I will say this about the new ITV drama series *Ellington*: that it really, er, no, what was it? Start again. Yes, *Ellington* is truly, er, come on, think woman. Sorry. No it's gone.

Great news for Thursday nights, then! A new drama about a sports promoter, starring Detective Inspector Burnside from *The Bill*. And it's indescribably dull! This is the harm that comes from people innocently watching pilots, you see. Eighteen months ago, *Ellington* was piloted, and ten million people tuned in. They should not have done that. Sitting at home laughing and jeering ("Right rubbish, this!"), those ten million sent the wrong signals to Network Centre, and now we have seven cheap-looking episodes about an unconvincing square-faced Londoner in a suit, who looks like a

copper, snarls like a copper, smarms his hair like a copper, and whose whole acting style might be labelled: "Move along now please, there's nothing to see."

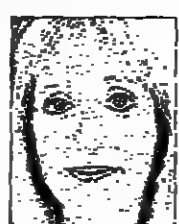
The production notes tell us that when looking for a vehicle for Chris Ellington (clever how they kept the essentials of his name, don't you think?), he laid claim to two enthusiasms: art and sport. So at least we were spared *Ellington: Art Promoter*. "Your boy Hirst," says a cheeky-lit actor you've never seen before. "He won't do as he's told. He likes to do things his own way." Ellington ripostes: "He's the best young artist we've seen for years, and he's going right to the top." Hirst grabs Ellington's arm. "Thank you for having faith in me, Mr. Ellington." "If you want to improve the steps of the Tate Gallery," snarls Ellington, pointing up the steps of the Tate Gallery. "Thank me in there."

The script was terrible, nobody was good-looking, and hilariously,

the production team have decided that the way to convince us that this is the Real World of Sports is to employ real-life sportsmen each week to wave "Hi, Ellington!" across a bar. Last night the lucky chump was Ian Botham, and of course the play backedfire, simply reinforcing how bogus and pathetic the whole thing is. And talking of batshit, how about Ellington's tough refusal to succumb to laughably faint persuasion from a female rival sports promoter with fat knees? "Listen," he barked. "I'm on my own. I'm not interested in mergers, or partnerships... or anything like that!" Great lines of the world, eh?

Signals of a more sophisticated sort were to be found in *Wildlife on One* (BBC1, not Scotland), in which families of Caribbean dolphins clicked and buzzed at each other, observed by a bouncy boatload of female Ameri-

REVIEW



Lynne Truss

can marine biologists. Normally I am rather suspicious of soundtracks in natural history programmes. I assume the noises have been added later in the studio by a man with a tray of gravel and a selection of whistles. But in order to get the requisite cauphony for some of the great underwater set-pieces last night, you would need a room full of bleeps variously waving geiger counters, blowing

violently through haircombs, scratching balloons down blackboards, blowing bubbles through a bowl of water, and making "wah wah" sounds like a faraway baby. (If this scene ever took place, incidentally, I would very much like to see it.)

Living next door to dolphins must be hell. The din is appalling. If an aquatic creature is ever discovered with a room-handle-shaped protruberance on its right arm, we will guess at once the evolutionary logic. Dolphins use sound as a weapon: they sun prey with it, they yell at each other, and they also use it for parental reprimand, regardless of the neighbours. In an extraordinary sequence last night, a little spotted dolphin was told off for messing about. Sternly, his mother escorted him to the sea floor and then sort-of drilled him with sound. It looked like a short, sharp shock. When she had finished, they swam back to the

surface together, and she rubbed flippers with him to show there were no hard feelings. To observe and understand such gestures, the female researchers have watched the dolphins for about ten years. It is the best job anybody has got in the whole wide world.

Of course, the trouble with cross-species communication is that there is so much unspoken: so much room for misunderstanding. For example, do dolphins really enjoy playing pass-the-seaweed with humans, or do they just hesitate to suggest *Munopoly*? Similarly, when aliens buzz us from outer space, perhaps they don't wish to bypass the secrecy of governments and reach the common people. Perhaps they just want to test our governments, to see whether we can keep a secret. In which case, apparently, they are rarely disappointed.

Secrets of the Paranormal

(BBC2) gives video equipment and editorial back-up to fanatics, and allows them to make a case. Last night's first instalment was a strong one, in which Jenny Randles conducted research into UFO sightings in a variety of ways, but mainly sorted through files as the Public Record Office. Rather perversely, these paper-work interludes (flip, flip, flip) were the most fascinating, since—unlike footage of "aliens"—such stuff is subject to television. Randles interviewed ordinary people who had close encounters, and who claimed they'd been visited by bowler-hatted heavies from the Ministry of Defence. Do such heavies exist, however? An unofficial spokesman said no, they must be impostors. It was a creepy suggestion worthy of *The X-Files*. Perhaps the men in the bowler hats are aliens, too! All together now: *Bippedy-boppety-bippedy-boppety* hip hip hip...

CHOICE

Tomorrow's World: The Prince of Wales Award for Innovation (BBC1, 7.30pm)

Trying to redress its lousy image, Yorkshire Water has jointly developed a high-tech valve which will enable water companies to spot leaks and monitor supplies. But does the Wizky deserve an award from the Prince of Wales any more than Lotus's new Elise, an expensive performance car which has little to do with the needs of ordinary motorists? The sensible money might be on a device which sprays burglars, and their booty, with a liquid detectable under ultraviolet light. All three are up for a going, along with three other innovations whose commercial success is already proven—an "intelligent" artificial leaf, a means of protecting cotton crops without using artificial chemicals and something called ICE, which prevents the plating of metals. HRH is on hand to announce and congratulate the winners.

999 (BBC1, 9.30pm)

Just when you are starting to feel uneasy about enjoying other people's mishaps from the comfort of your armchair, the programme shifts your doubts by moving into its other mode as a purveyor of propaganda for first aid. This is the fifth series of 999, which suggests that the public appetite for near-death experiences is still far from satiated. Happily, tragedy is always preceded at the last minute usually thanks to the courage and expertise of the rescuers. Whether as hero of a girl sailor trapped under her boat or of covers off by a rescuer, in tonight's third emergency, however, the hero is the victim. A tree surgeon who slices an artery with a fearsome stump-cutting machine remembers a first aid tip from his childhood and does the right thing in the nick of time.

7.20 Watch Out (BBC1, 7.20pm)

Simon King presents a video news (7.20pm)

John Martyn in concert (7.30pm)

7.30 The Transatlantic Sessions (BBC1, 7.30pm)

Folk and country music performers from Scotland and North America including John Martyn (BBC1, 7.30pm)

8.00 Top Gear Motorsport (BBC1, 8.00pm)

Tony Mason reports on this year's British Rally Championships (BBC1, 8.00pm)

8.30 Gardeners' World (BBC1, 8.30pm)

Celebrates 150 years of the National Chrysanthemum Society. Plus a floral look at catfish (BBC1, 8.30pm)

8.15 Golf — the US Masters 1996 (BBC1, 8.15pm)

Liv coverage from Georgia (BBC1, 8.15pm)

10.30 Newswatch (BBC1, 10.30pm)

11.15 *Fantasy Football League* (BBC1, 11.15pm)

11.45 *This Life* (BBC1, 11.45pm)

12.35 *Film: A Short Film About Killing* (BBC1, 12.35pm)

12.50 *Newsnight* (BBC1, 12.50pm)

1.15 *Fantasy Football League* (BBC1, 1.15pm)

1.45 *This Life* (BBC1, 1.45pm)

2.15 *Fantasy Football League* (BBC1, 2.15pm)

2.45 *This Life* (BBC1, 2.45pm)

3.15 *Fantasy Football League* (BBC1, 3.15pm)

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4.15 *Fantasy Football League* (BBC1, 4.15pm)

4.45 *This Life* (BBC1, 4.45pm)

5.15 *Fantasy Football League* (BBC1, 5.15pm)

5.45 *This Life* (BBC1, 5.45pm)

6.15 *Fantasy Football League* (BBC1, 6.15pm)

6.45 *This Life* (BBC1, 6.45pm)

7.15 *Fantasy Football League* (BBC1, 7.15pm)

7.45 *This Life* (BBC1, 7.45pm)

8.15 *Fantasy Football League* (BBC1, 8.15pm)

8.45 *This Life* (BBC1, 8.45pm)

9.15 *Fantasy Football League* (BBC1, 9.15pm)

9.45 *This Life* (BBC1, 9.45pm)

10.15 *Fantasy Football League* (BBC1, 10.15pm)

10.45 *This Life* (BBC1, 10.45pm)

11.15 *Fantasy Football League* (BBC1, 11.15pm)

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4.15 *Fantasy Football League* (BBC1, 4.15pm)

4.45 *This Life* (BBC1, 4.45pm)

5.15 *Fantasy Football League* (BBC1, 5.15pm)

5.45 *This Life* (BBC1, 5.45pm)

6.00am GMTV (2252396)

9.25 Win, Lose or Draw (S) (711421) 9.55 Regional News (Teletext) (663890)

10.00 Batman — the Animated Series (S) (655657) 10.25 Cartoon (S) (6140831)

10.35 FILM: A Son's Promise (1990) with Rick Schroder. Mark on TV weeps based on the true story. Directed by John Ford (S) (4341473)

12.20pm HTV News (Teletext) (6855009)

12.30 News and weather (Teletext) (3884270)

12.55 Murder, She Wrote (S) (7843367) 2.00 Home and Away (Teletext) (S) (6547809)

2.25 Chain Letters (Teletext) (S) (54740631) 2.50 The Good Health Guide (Teletext) (408305)

3.20 News (Teletext) (7841590)

3.25 Regional News (Teletext) (7840831)

3.30 Zzzapt (S) (897367) 3.45 The Wind in the Willows (S) (Teletext) (S) (483218)

4.15 Garfield and Friends (S) (502116)

4.25 The Geeks (Teletext) (5078034)

4.55 Hang On (S) (4030928)

5.10 A Country Practice (S) (6925421)

5.40 News and weather (Teletext) (572947)

6.00 Home and Away (S) (Teletext) (S) (865611)

6.25 HTV News (Teletext) (116102)

6.45 Sportsweek (Teletext) (315724)

7.00 Bruce Forsyth's Play Your Cards Right (Teletext) (S) (6555)

7.30 Coronation Street (S) (6555)

8.00 The Bill (Sun Hill hosts a part for police pensioners and widows (Teletext) (6725)

8.30 The Upper Hand (When Laura gets caught away at a casino, Caroline's quick thinking saves the night (S) (Teletext) (S) (8580))

9.00 Soldier, Soldier (Pe-run of the third series. The King's Fusiliers are in New Zealand, where they have to get out of hand (S) (Teletext) (S) (7541))

10.00 News and weather (Teletext) (33725)

10.30 HTV West News (Teletext) (754657)

10.40 Entertainment (S) (Teletext) (S) (6555)

11.00 FILM: The Fall of the House of Usher (1950, b/w) with Vincent Price, Mark Damon and Myrna Loy. Horror based on the Edgar Allan Poe classic. Directed by Roger Corman (567763)

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FRIDAY APRIL 12 1996

Ballesteros recalls Augusta heyday with inspired recovery shots

Gilford shows first round mastery again

FROM JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT, IN AUGUSTA

THE Masters reveres tradition and, at Augusta National Golf Club, it is now traditional that David Gilford leads the Masters. The soft-spoken Englishman did so on his first visit to this famous tournament, in 1995, not allowing himself to be overawed as he walked in the footsteps of so much history. In his quiet, understated way, he did so again yesterday.

It was not for long in 1995, and it was not for long yesterday, Bob Tway, playing with Ted Tryba in the match ahead of Gilford, came in with a 67, five under par, to be the early leader in the first round. However, he was rudely shouldered aside by a storming 65 by Phil Mickelson. The left-hander, many people's favourite to win here, had an astonishing inward half of 30.

Nevertheless, the name Gilford, accompanied by the red figure 2, to indicate he was two under par, appeared on leaderboards all over the course, and for a time there was no one to challenge him. Two under after three holes, Gilford jumped to four under after he eagled the 13th.

No other golf course in the world has such a capability to defend itself against anyone taking liberties with it. It offers the velvet glove one minute, the iron fist the next. The velvet glove had been proffered on the 13th. Gilford's three-iron ended 12 feet from the hole and he sank the putt for a three on a hole where players are sometimes grateful to escape with a five. As Gilford stood on the 16th tee, a six-iron in his hand, he might have sensed he was about to be hit by the iron fist.

All week there has been a biting wind in this part of Georgia. This, combined with morning and evening cutting of the greens, made them as fast as in recent memory on the opening day. Gilford's tee shot on the 16th ended 30 feet from the flag, which was positioned in the top right-hand corner of the green. His first attempt on this notorious-

ly tricky green, which is exceptionally fast, almost stopped by the hole.

"I hit it a smidgen too much," Gilford said. The result was that, after almost coming to a halt, it slowly gained momentum and began running back down the green. It ended further away than it had started. Welcome to Augusta, to what Johnny Miller calls the spring putting contest.

Gilford's next putt shot past the hole, so did his next and it was with some relief that he holed out for a five, a double bogey. Gilford's excessive quietness is not a front. He really is as unperturbable as he seems and this characteristic



Tway: early leader

came to his rescue now for, regrouping himself and his emotions, he hit a nine-iron to four feet and sank it for a birdie, his third of the day, on the 17th. He finished with a par four for a 69, one stroke ahead of Paul Azinger.

In the United States, Gilford is known not only for his soft-spoken nature and his putt to defeat Brad Faxon in the last Ryder Cup. Word that he is a gentleman farmer has reached these shores, too, bringing with it numerous jokes about mad cow disease.

"A one-man farm can sometimes be 250 acres; mine is 50," Gilford said. "It really is a hobby. I have 25 to 30 cattle

aged between 2½ and six years old. I have never had a case of BSE. Normally my cattle would fetch £150 each, but now I suppose they are worth nothing." He paused and smiled before adding: "I am still eating beef."

Right on cue for the start of the sixtieth Masters, the temperature rose and what could pass for a proper spring sun in these southern states of the United States came out to shine on Gene Sarazen, Sam Snead and Byron Nelson as they performed the opening ceremony. Sarazen, Nelson and finally Snead, whose ages total 261 years, all drove from the 1st tee, in a vivid, Proustian tableau, a blessed remembrance of times past.

All three found the fairway, which was more than could be said for Severiano Ballesteros, who bunkered his drives at the 1st and 2nd, at the short 4th, and the long 8th. You would not have known it from his score. With the sort of wizardry that must have impressed his young nephews who, with their father, Manuel, were leading the Ballesteros support group, he saved par on the 1st and 2nd and squeezed a birdie out of the uphill 8th to reach the turn in 38.

His swing on the raised 10th tee looked as smooth as ever, etched in the mind's eye against a background of pine trees, but in attempting to draw his drive so that his ball would land and bound down the slope, Ballesteros overdid it. The ball ricocheted from a tree on the left of the fairway and stopped perhaps 230 yards from the tee, 60 yards behind Jeff Maggert, not a notably long hitter. From a downhill and downhill lie, Ballesteros hit a thin-looking iron shot that ended short and left of the green. Again his short game came to his rescue. He pitched to nine feet and holed.

That recovery marked the start of a good run. He came back in 35, one under par, thanks to a birdie on the 15th, and his 73 is a better score than you would have thought possible if you had watched him driving on the 1st and 2nd holes. Augusta, a course and a place Ballesteros adores, may yet prove to be a welcome stop on his journey to recovery.

For Frank Nobilo, like Gilford playing in his second Masters, it provided a new experience. Peter Jacobsen, his playing partner, had withdrawn only moments before teeing off, suffering from sore muscles in his chest. Nobilo played the first two holes on his own. "It was weird," the New Zealander said after his 71. "It was like going to a wedding without the bride."

It was a lot less weird, however, than Sam Torrance's 80, his worst score here by four strokes. For Torrance, for whom so much seems to be going so well, this was a rare setback and in marked contrast to the brilliance of his playing partner, Mickelson.



Gilford acknowledges the applause of the appreciative gallery during his superb first round at Augusta

Portuguese club may offer misfit Brolin an escape route

BY DAVID MADDAMS

TOMAS BROLIN, the Leeds United forward, is about to end his troubled tenure at Elland Road. The player's agent was in Portugal last night, for talks with FC Porto about a prospective transfer.

Brolin, a Sweden international, has publicly declared his determination to leave Leeds, just four months after joining the club in a £2.5 million transfer. Despite becoming the club's history, he was constantly overlooked by Howard Wilkinson, the manager, as relations between the pair appeared to degenerate.

Brolin was only a substitute at the Coca-Cola Cup final, and afterwards expressed his wish for a speedy departure, when told by Tommy Svensson, the Sweden manager, that his international place was in jeopardy.

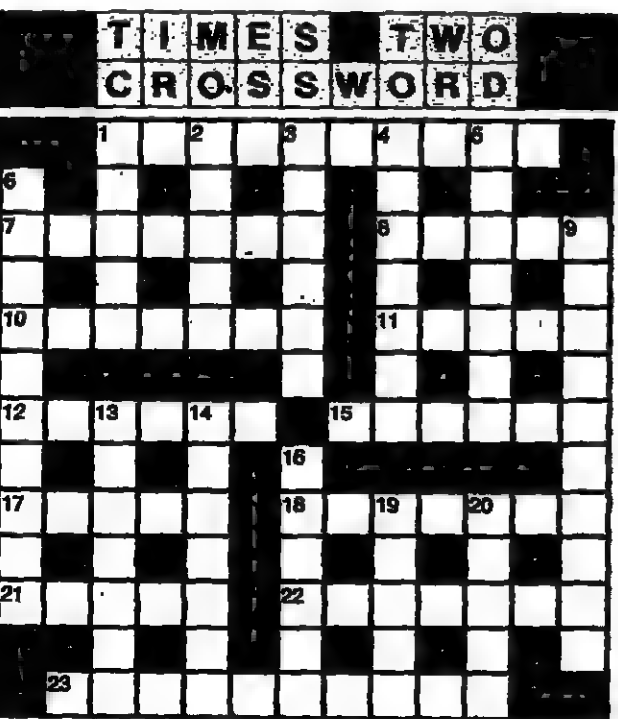
Now Lars Petersen, his agent, is negotiating the move that will end an unhappy chapter in his career. He said that talks were progressing with Porto, and added: "I think it is time for Tomas to move to another club."

Mick McCarthy, the Ireland manager, has been barred from receiving FA Cup final tickets for the next ten years, after it was discovered that two tickets allocated to him for last year's final had been sold on for a figure nearly six times their face value.

The Football Association (FA) accepted that McCarthy had not profited from the sale. He had given the tickets to friends, who had sold them on. A spokesman for the FA, however, said that the situation reflected the need for supreme caution.

"We want to avoid these situations at all costs," he said. "Mr McCarthy's 660 tickets were sold to Norwegians for £350 each, and that really does bring the game into disrepute. It is a rip-off."

Ivano Bonetti, of Grimsby Town, has finally made peace with Brian Laws, his club manager. The Italian forward, who signed from Juventus, suffered a fractured cheekbone after a dressing-room altercation with Laws earlier this season. Yesterday, however, Bonetti pledged his future to the club. "I want to play for the club. I have no further argument with the manager," he said.



No 754

ACROSS

- 1 Sentient foam for tub (6-4)
- 7 Current resistance/PD relationship (4-3)
- 8 Circumference (5)
- 10 Undress (7)
- 11 Once more (5)
- 12 Psychic energy (6)
- 15 Session with medium (6)
- 17 Tiny piece of bread or comfort (5)
- 18 Give way to influence (7)
- 21 Pacific island, rugby in West (5)
- 22 Hard cheese (7)
- 23 Right in the middle (4-6)

DOWN

- 1 Knocks against; child's eg birthday horseplay (5)
- 2 Phil Silver's Sergeant (5)
- 3 Unemphatic (3-3)
- 4 Impediments; naughty woman (7)
- 5 Land, esp. the lie of it (7)
- 6 Three Bears girl (10)
- 9 German WW1 marshal, had a line (10)
- 13 One from Birmingham (7)
- 14 Expert (slang) (3-4)
- 16 Nymph loved by Cupid; the soul (6)
- 19 Trickster (5)
- 20 Excessive (5)

The solution to 753 will be published Wednesday, April 17

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Clubs appeal to Bishop in attempt to break deadlock with RFU

BY DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

BILL BISHOP, the president of the Rugby Football Union (RFU), is the man who can break the deadlock between the union and its leading clubs. Yesterday, the clubs appealed to Bishop to exert his authority in the search for a reconciliation, without which they will withdraw from all RFU competitions next season.

Only a year ago, Bishop, then senior vice-president, was cast in the role of "old man" after televised comments about the RFU committee by Will Carling, then England captain. Now, the 66-year-old Cornishman may become a unifying force but only by overriding the union's negotiating panel, including Cliff Brittle, chairman of the RFU executive committee but perceived by the clubs as the main stumbling block.

Twelve club representatives - nine from the first division of the Courage Clubs Championship and three from the second, including the six directors of the English Professional Rugby Union Clubs Ltd (EPRUC) - met in London yesterday and agreed not to participate in the RFU club

structure proposed for the coming season. Instead, they seek the union's acceptance of their own structure, embracing a 12-club English Conference, plus an Anglo-Welsh tournament and European competition.

"We accept that the union is the governing body," Donald Kerr, the EPRUC chairman, said. "But we do want to arrange and manage our own affairs and maximise the revenue we need to run our clubs. At this stage we don't intend to resign from the union but we are fighting for our future. If anyone at the RFU thinks this is a game of bluff, they are sadly mistaken."

After a five-hour meeting, the club representatives emerged to claim that not only did they carry their own management boards with them - and by extension club members - but that leading players, whose representatives met the RFU yesterday, were fully informed of their intentions.

"We are not some Packer-type organisation who will go off and play rebel rugby," Peter Wheeler, spokesman for the first division clubs, said. "We are a body of clubs that have been around for 100 years and more, we have deep

roots in our communities. We are not a bunch of guys coming along, looking to make a fast buck or hijack anything. We believe this is the right way forward."

Though the clubs may be temporising now, their belief, is that they have both the commercial and television support to sustain a breakaway. If they cannot reach

Thomas Wacker, 52, an American-born Irishman, is to be the new chief executive of the International Rugby Football Board. Wacker, an investment banker, was named yesterday to succeed Keith Rowlands and will start his new job on May 1. Wacker was chairman of IFG International and First National Trustee Company.

accord with the union, they intend to put their independent plans in motion and begin their English Conference games on August 31.

"Even at this late hour we believe that a compromise solution must be reached with the RFU, otherwise there will be a split for which the RFU will be held responsible," a statement said. That is the

position which the union's full committee will discuss today.

"I'm delighted they have stopped short of a breakaway or anything that would make the position very difficult to reconcile," Tony Hallett, the RFU secretary, said. The clubs believe it significant that Bishop was not present on Tuesday, when the RFU declared its unbending opposition to the concept of shared control of the English game - a concept which has drawn support from, among others, Syd Millar, president of the Irish Rugby Football Union. "It's a pity that one or two of Cliff Brittle's colleagues on the RFU are stabbing him in the back," Millar said, suggesting that English clubs were taking the road to bankruptcy.

Their contention is that they will arrive there anyway, if they toe the RFU line. "The RFU has made it clear that there is no more money to fund the professional game next year," Wheeler said. "We have nothing to lose going outside the union."

"But we are moving to the point where we are staring down the barrel, and that's where common sense must prevail."

EARLY FIRST-ROUND SCORES

US unless stated, par 72

- 68: P Mickelson
67: R Tway
66: L Jansen
66: D Gilford (GB), B Faxon
70: P Azinger, S McCarron, S McCarron
71: T Aaron, J Maggert, F Nobilo (NZ), N Price (Zim), S Lowery
72: T Tryba, H Sutton
73: S Ballesteros (Sp)


74: D A Webb, J Sutton, M Roe (GB), A Palmer

- 75: G Brewer, B Casper
76: K Tipton, E Dougherty, N Lancaster, T Horton, S Harringer
78: B Bryant, M McCumber, J Baker-Finch (Aus)
79: G Marucci, S Torrance (GB)
81: D Ford
82: C Coody
Withdrew: P Jacobsen
* amateur


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France's fading stars
Kate Muir on the death of haute cuisine
WEEKEND




Anatole Kaletsky
on life under Labour
Part one, **PAGE 20**



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to spend at your favourite supermarket
WEEKEND. PAGE 10



Summer of '96
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MAGAZINE

Middle class? John is still working class, says Mr Prescott senior



BY ANDREW PIERCE
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

JOHN PRESCOTT, who made the ultimate leap for new Labour yesterday when he abandoned his working-class roots and announced he had joined the middle classes, was rebuked by his 85-year-old father last night.

The deputy Labour leader, whose class warrior approach to politics and abrasive rhetoric had often seemed at odds with Tony Blair's attempts to modernise the party, took even his enemies by surprise.

Challenged about Labour's move away from its working-class traditions on Radio 4's *Today* programme yesterday Mr Prescott, former ship-

ping steward and MP for Hull East, replied: "I can tell you, I'm pretty middle class."

Nobody was more astonished by his class conversion than his father, John, a former railway signaller, who said: "He is the son of a railwayman and grandson of a miner. How can he be anything other than working class? John worked as a steward on ships serving drinks to well-to-do passengers. If that's not working class I cannot think what is. When I see him I shall ask him what he thinks he's playing at. He should be proud to be working class. I am."

Mr Prescott, 55, and his wife, Pauline, live in an eight-bedroom house with crenellations in a row of smart detached houses on the edge of

East Hull, known locally as "Prescott Towers".

Mr Prescott senior, who lives in a £32-a-week one-bedroom council flat in Chester, said: "I live in the hope of seeing him in an even bigger house. The one at 10 Downing Street. But he would still be the same working-class lad I brought up."

"John has had to work all his life, which makes him working class. I know some people think they can move up a class in life if they get on a bit but they are daft. Once you are working class that's the end of it. There is too much middle-class talk in today's Labour Party."

Mr Prescott senior, a Labour Party stalwart for 50 years, former councillor and magistrate, said: "I had small

savings with the Red Cross and cashed in all my insurance policies to buy the house. John has a grand big house and garden but that does not put him up in a different class."

"It's because of his working-class values that he has become what he is. I am very proud of him. But he has to stop this middle-class nonsense. Some boys still listen to their father, you know, no matter how old they are."

There was also disappointment in Hull at Mr Prescott's conversion. John Canvess, secretary of Hull Trades & Labour Club, said: "We don't want any truck with this middle-class talk here." At the Belmont social club in his constituency they were not surprised. Leslie

Runklee, the secretary, said: "He is a hypocrite. They are all as bad."

Harry Woodford, a Hull Labour councillor and Mr Prescott's agent, said: "I don't care what class anybody is as long as they vote Labour."

Ken Turner, shipping grades organiser in Hull for the Rail, Maritime and Transport Union worked on the ships when Mr Prescott was a steward and has known the MP since 1964. "He's not lost any of his working-class values, his position remains as it always was on the side of the workers."

Mr Prescott was unmoved: "Only in England could you have a big argument about class."



'Soul-searching' plea by Redwood

Right calls for change after poll collapse

BY ARTHUR LEATHLEY AND PETER RIDDELL

JOHN MAJOR faced a fresh outbreak of unrest in the Tory party last night as right-wing MPs demanded a change of direction in the wake of a devastating by-election setback for the Government.

Hours after the Labour Party inflicted a stunning defeat in the Staffordshire South East by-election, turning a Conservative majority of 7,192 into a Labour one of 13,762 and reducing the Government's majority to one, senior Conservatives issued a warning of further electoral losses unless new policies were introduced swiftly.

A string of right-wing MPs called for further tax cuts and clearer policies on Europe to win back voters. John Redwood, the former Cabinet minister, led criticism of the party's recent strategy by attacking the lack of vision and demanding a "moral crusade" of tax-cutting to win back Tory supporters. Writing in *The Times* today, Mr Redwood calls for some "soul-searching" by the Conservatives and says that the by-election result should not be "brushed aside too readily by the Government. People's worries should be taken seriously."

Defeat aftermath

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Senior Tories admitted that they were shaken by the size of Labour's victory. "This is about as bad as we could have expected," one party campaigner said.

A jubilant Tony Blair said last night that Labour's triumph meant that it now cut across traditional class and party divisions and was the only party representing the centre and capable of uniting the country.

Speaking as he finished a three-day visit to Washington, Mr Blair said that it was increasingly possible that the general election would come earlier than next year. It was time for the people to make their choice. He wanted to ensure that Labour was in shape to govern the country.

Speaking in Washington, the Labour leader sought to appear the national rather than party leader, saying that at his White House meeting with President Clinton yesterday they had discussed world problems such as Northern Ireland, free trade and global economic insecurity rather than merely partisan matters.

The President praised Mr Blair for his "very statesman-like" approach to the Northern Ireland peace process, treating the Labour leader like a prime minister in waiting.

In London, Mr Major made clear that he is not preparing a

change of course to attract Tory voters, insisting that more work needed to be done "to get our message across". But Tories voiced fears that further heavy defeats in next month's local elections could allow Labour to build up an unstoppable momentum.

Although the Prime Minister conceded that the by-election defeat was disappointing, he tried to calm Tory nerves by telling MPs not to over-react to the result and by reminding them that the party had bounced back from by-election setbacks to win general elections.

"I remember many people consigned the Government to oblivion after the Ribbles Valley by-election, where the swing was the same. We went on to win the general election a year later with the largest popular vote ever. I am disappointed by last night's result, but politics is not an easy ride. I am here to do what is right and stick with it."

It was Mr Blair's claim that the result showed Labour as a new party of the centre ground that prompted Tory right-wingers to press for a more distinctive approach from the Government.

Nicholas Budgen, a leading right-wing Tory MP and Euro-sceptic, said the party had not been radical enough and too much attention was being given to "the so-called 'middle ground'".

Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, appeared to support calls for a change of emphasis. He said: "Yesterday's by-election must be the signal for a new Conservative crusade to alert people to the dangers they face from a Labour government."



Susannah Schofield, widow of the BBC radio reporter John Schofield, who was killed in Croatia last year, shows off their daughter Charlotte, now six days old. Mr Schofield had covered the Balkan conflict since hostilities began in 1991

Thousands flee as Israeli jets attack Lebanon

BY ROSS DUNN IN JERUSALEM AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

ISRAELI helicopters and jets yesterday carried out a series of attacks on Beirut and other Lebanese towns and villages. Syria said one of its soldiers was killed and seven were seriously wounded at an air defence position in the Lebanese capital. Witnesses said that at least 12 people, including civilians, were hurt in Beirut. Israel denied it was targeting Syrian troops. However, Herzl Bondinger, Israel's air force commander, said yesterday that the attacks on Lebanon would continue throughout the night.

An Israeli spokesman said its warplanes and helicopters were hunting Hezbollah targets in Beirut and the south, where thousands of people fled after being warned that attacks would target 49 towns and villages within four hours. The deadline was later extended by two hours. Israeli planes then carried out at least six raids. Lebanese security sources said eight civilians were killed and eight wounded in the Bekaa Valley.

The attack on the valley, where many of the 35,000 Syrian troops in Lebanon are stationed, increased the risk of dragging Damascus into the conflict.

British tourists are to be evacuated from Lebanon today and many others who planned to visit the region over the next few weeks have cancelled their plans.

The decision was taken after the Foreign Office issued a warning yesterday that "travel south of Beirut is inadvisable", stepping up its previous advice to visitors simply to take care.

As soon as the attacks began, Cox and Kings, a British tour operator with two groups in Lebanon, organised an airlift for a party of 12 who had arrived in Beirut only 24 hours earlier.

"Naturally we are worried that the problem will escalate and we do not want to put any of our customers at risk," said Jenny Hand, from Cox and Kings. Another of the company's groups, which had flown to Syria and was due to spend a day in the Bekaa Valley, will now be redirected.

Other tour operators are also planning to change itineraries. Sheila Taylor of Martin Randall Travel described the fighting as "heartbreaking". She said, however, that the firm had to pull its clients out or to change their travel plans.

Israeli attacks, page 11
Leading article, page 21

Winter makes a comeback

Parts of Britain were hit by snow, sleet and freezing temperatures. Motorists in the Pennines and the Peak District faced heavy rain and snow flurries. The London Weather Centre said that it would get warmer again today and above-average temperatures are expected by Tuesday. Page 24

Mercy killing

An elderly cancer victim died after her son gave her medical heroin "to ease her agony". The man called for new laws to allow mercy killing as police investigated. Page 3

Teenager on murder charge escapes

BY RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

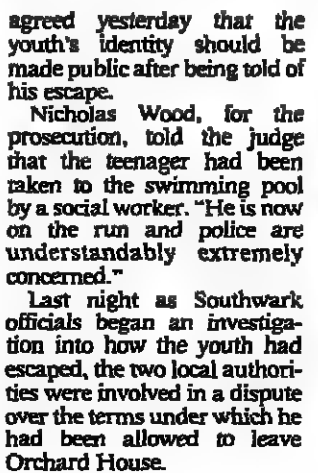
A **TEENAGER** accused of murdering Ted Howell, 75, last November. The pensioner was alleged to have been stabbed to death during a burglary at his home in Lewisham.

Cleon Reid was arrested on December 16 and at Camberwell youth court was remanded into the care of Lewisham council's social services department, on condition that he was placed in secure accommodation. The council has no accommodation of that standard so it put him in Orchard House, secure accommodation run by Southwark council. Judge Geoffrey Grigson

agreed yesterday that the youth's identity should be made public after being told of his escape.

Nicholas Wood, for the prosecution, told the judge that the teenager had been taken to the swimming pool by a social worker. "He is now on the run and police are understandably extremely concerned."

Last night as Southwark officials began an investigation into how the youth had escaped, the two local authorities were involved in a dispute over the terms under which he had been allowed to leave Orchard House.

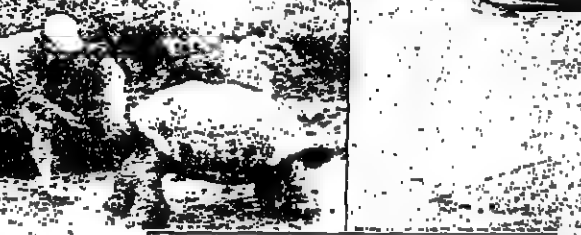


Reid: fled after swim

Report: The Times magazine is for 50p. Canada: \$3.95. Caribbean: \$3.95. Europe: £3.95. USA: \$12.95. Australia: \$12.95. New Zealand: \$12.95. South Africa: \$12.95. India: \$12.95. Japan: \$12.95. Korea: \$12.95. Taiwan: \$12.95. Hong Kong: \$12.95. Singapore: \$12.95. Malaysia: \$12.95. Thailand: \$12.95. Philippines: \$12.95. Indonesia: \$12.95. Vietnam: \$12.95. Laos: \$12.95. Cambodia: \$12.95. Myanmar: \$12.95. Sri Lanka: \$12.95. Bangladesh: \$12.95. Pakistan: \$12.95. Afghanistan: \$12.95. Iran: \$12.95. Iraq: \$12.95. Kuwait: \$12.95. Saudi Arabia: \$12.95. Yemen: \$12.95. Oman: \$12.95. United Arab Emirates: \$12.95. Qatar: \$12.95. Bahrain: \$12.95. Brunei: \$12.95. Singapore: \$12.95. Malaysia: \$12.95. Thailand: \$12.95. Philippines: \$12.95. Indonesia: \$12.95. Vietnam: \$12.95. Laos: \$12.95. Cambodia: \$12.95. Myanmar: \$12.95. Sri Lanka: \$12.95. Bangladesh: \$12.95. Pakistan: \$12.95. Afghanistan: \$12.95. Iran: \$12.95. Iraq: \$12.95. Kuwait: \$12.95. 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THE TIMES
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13 PAGES OF SPORT

Can Greg Norman win his first Masters?
John Hopkins reports from Augusta



PLUS:
Can Newcastle keep up the championship chase?
Rob Hughes reports from St James's Park

French company plans to keep 30-year-old rolling stock and cut jobs

New rail chief dashes commuters' hopes

By JONATHAN PRYNN, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

MILLIONS of south of England commuters were condemned to travelling on 30-year-old "slam-door" trains for the foreseeable future yesterday by the new French owners of their rail franchise.

The French water company, Générale des Eaux, which won the franchise to run Network SouthCentral has warned that there are likely to be job losses among NSC's 3,000 employees and says it has no plans to replace ageing rolling stock on routes between London and the south coast during its seven year contract starting this summer. Instead, the fleet of 800 Mark 1 electric units, built in York between 1963 and 1967, will be

refurbished to extend their lives to the end of the franchise in 2003, when they will have completed 40 years of service.

Antoine Hurel, the vice chairman of London and South Coast railways, the subsidiary of Générale des Eaux that will run the franchise, said the company would spend up to £10 million improving trains and stations, a maximum of £12,500 per train.

However, rail experts said the planned expenditure would do little to improve the cramped and uncomfortable travelling conditions of commuters. "That's nothing, you will hardly even get a new livery for that," said Barry Doe, a leading transport con-



Hurel: jobs warning

sultant. "These trains are among the most shabby and demoralised left in the country and the thought of having to use them for the next seven years is a pretty grim one."

The franchise provides services from London's Victoria, Charing Cross and London Bridge stations to south west London, Surrey, Sussex and Hampshire, including the resorts of Hastings, Eastbourne, Brighton, Worthing and Bognor Regis.

The failure by Roger Salmon, the rail franchise director, to secure new rolling stock for the line is being seen as a setback for rail privatisation, which the Government has pledged would lead to orders for modern trains.

Mr Salmon, who announced on Wednesday that he is to leave the job in October, said: "The rolling stock is fit for the life of this franchise and replacing it would not be economic. The

Health and Safety Executive is content with this." Roger Ford, editor of *Rail Privatisation News*, said: "This is just another bog standard deal that is no more than a contract to run services on behalf of the taxpayer."

Clare Short, the Shadow Transport Secretary, said: "This award will do nothing to reassure passengers of the safety and reliability of services on these lines, which have rolling stock dating back to the 1960s. This will mean more misery for travellers."

The report into the Clapham disaster recommended that all slam door trains should be replaced by 1997 and last year's Holden report into the Cowden accident, in which five people

died, said that the chance of surviving a major crash in a Mark 1 train was "very low".

The report estimated the cost of strengthening the trains to match the level of protection of modern carriages at £300,000 each.

Mr Hurel also announced that the existing British Rail timetable will be safeguarded and that there would be off peak and Sunday services for South London and a new express service between London and Brighton.

In its first year the new company will receive a government subsidy of £85.3 million - compared to the original British Rail claim for a £106.28 million subsidy. The franchise is the sixth to pass into private hands.

New duke
not man
for all
seasons

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

THE cream of Scotland's aristocracy, dressed in their clan tartan, sat beside tweed-suited gillies, gamekeepers and factors yesterday in the Gothic cathedral of Dunkeld to honour the memory of the 10th Duke of Atholl, George Iain Murray.

Only one man looked out of place. John Murray, a semi-retired surveyor from a South African village, who shivered in a tropical-weight blue suit and light coat. The 11th duke had come with his wife, Peggy, and eldest son, Bruce, now Marquess of Tullibardine, to pay respects at his predecessor's memorial service. It was the first time the new duke had visited the area since the death of his distant cousin. But it was not the grove of proud Douglas firs overlooking the 13th-century cathedral that made the greatest impression on him, nor the silvery waters of the Tay. It was the weather.

Born and bred in South Africa, the 61-year-old duke looked blue with cold in the biting April wind. Apologising for saying little to waiting journalists, he ex-



The 11th duke, centre, outside the cathedral yesterday with his son Bruce behind

plained: "I am sorry; my mind doesn't function in sub-zero temperatures."

He did, however, reaffirm that the future of the 85-strong Atholl Highlanders, the only private army in Europe and the pride of the late duke, was secure. "It is obvious that the army should be kept." The force may visit his country.

The 10th duke was known for his kindness but also his painful shyness. The 11th duke appears to have inherited the condition. He is a down-to-earth man who has no plans to use his title and for whom the family motto

Tout Prest (Quite Ready) seems inappropriate.

He has been staying at Blair Castle since Wednesday and will spend the next week visiting relatives. The castle and the 70,000-acre estate have been placed in trust and do not go with the title, although the late duke's will has yet to be made public.

Five hundred of his family and friends filled the cathedral yesterday and pipers echoed through the streets of the tiny Perthshire town. The Very Rev Professor Sir Robin Barbour, who fought with the

9th duke in the last war, conducted the service. The Earl of Wemyss and March, who took over from the late duke as president of the National Trust for Scotland, praised his stewardship of the private army. "He found it in a state of eclipse and, by the light of his personality, it shines again. He was a first-class steward of a wonderful part of Scotland."

Many of the duke's charitable and sporting interests attended, including the RNLI and Red Deer Commission.

Memorial service, page 22

Burger boss goes into higher orbit

By JOANNA BALE

The owner of the Planet Hollywood burger restaurants has seen his personal wealth rise from £80 million to £300 million in a year, making him Britain's fastest-rising entrepreneur in the *Sunday Times* survey *Britain's Richest 500*.

The increase has taken Robert Earl from 143rd place to the 37th. The top ten in the survey all rank as billionaires for the first time in five years.

The worldwide chain of Planet Hollywood have become money-spinners with the help of actors Sylvester Stallone, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Bruce Willis, who all have a stake. Mr Earl, 44, a catering graduate of Surrey University, is

about to float the company on the American Stock Exchange and claims his wealth is actually nearer £500 million.

Another spectacular success is Joseph Lewis, a currency and art dealer living in the Bahamas, who has risen from 52nd place to joint 8th with £1,000 million. Britain's wealthiest man remains the food packaging magnate Hans Rausing who has a wealth of £2,880 million. Mr Rausing, born in Sweden, shared the honour last year with his brother Gad, who co-owns the successful drinks container company TetraPak. As Gad has moved to Switzerland, and therefore no longer lives and works in Britain, this excludes him from the British survey.

Only 38 women feature in the list, led by

the Queen at joint 26th place with a reported £450 million. The survey, published tomorrow, is the eighth annual analysis of rises and falls. The top ten are: 1. Hans Rausing, food packaging, £2,880m; 2. David Sainsbury and family, retailing, £2,520m; 3. Garfield Weston and family, food production, £2,200m; 4. The Duke of Westminster, landowner, £1,650m; 5. Sir John and Sir Adrian Swire, shipping and aviation, £1,300m; 6. Sir James Goldsmith, finance and politics, £1,200m; 7. John and Peter Moores, stores, mail order and football pools, £1,300m; 8. Gopi and Sri Hinduja, trading and finance, £1,000m; Joseph Lewis, finance, £1,000m; Viscount Rothermere, newspapers, £1,000m.

Police in
Dublin
question
bombing
suspect

By NICHOLAS WATT AND STEWART TENDLER

DETECTIVES in the Irish Republic were last night questioning a man suspected of involvement in the IRA's bombing campaign in Britain.

The man, aged 26, was detained in a dawn raid on a house in Finglas, a working-class suburb in north Dublin. He was arrested on Thursday under the Irish Republic's anti-terrorism legislation which allows him to be held without charge until later today.

His arrest followed a lengthy surveillance operation by Irish police after the bombing of South Quay in London's Docklands, the attack that marked the end of the IRA's ceasefire. Sources in the Metropolitan Police confirmed their interest in the suspect.

The man, who comes from a staunchly Republican family, is someone Scotland Yard has wanted to question for some time in connection with earlier bomb attacks.

They include "bicycle bombings" in 1994 in Brighton and Bognor Regis in which a terrorist unit planted bombs made up of Semtex explosives hidden in bicycle saddle bags. Shops were damaged in one of the strikes but there were no casualties.

He is understood to have remained under surveillance in Britain and the Irish Republic for the duration of the ceasefire.

It was expected that he would appear in court late last night to face a warrant for his extradition to Britain. The proceedings open at the District Court in Dublin at which the warrants are presented and a judge sets a date for a full hearing at the court.

If the District Court agrees to the warrant for extradition, the suspect can appeal to the High Court and then finally the Supreme Court.

Boy of 13
on murder
charge

A 13-year-old boy has been charged with the murder of Gavin Whalley, 22, a student of Kingston, Dorset, who was killed ten days ago in Sydney while on a working holiday. The juvenile will make his first appearance in a local children's court as Mr Whalley's body is being flown home today, accompanied by his parents, Margaret and Roger Kellow. Mr Whalley was stabbed seven times as he walked home from his part-time factory job.

Girls arrested

Three teenage girls were arrested yesterday in connection with the death of John Burge, 61, who suffered a heart attack as he tried to help his 17-year-old daughter Helen, who was being attacked by a gang in Oxford. The girls, two aged 16 and one 17 and all from Oxford, were released on bail after being questioned about suspected public order offences.

Payout to golfer

Philomena Vaughan, the golfer who punched an alleged grupper at a golf club trophy evening, won £8,847 compensation from the club. Mrs Vaughan, 42, was sacked as manager of Dewstow Golf Club at Caerwent, Gwent, after refusing to apologise to John Price, the man she hit. An industrial tribunal in Cardiff ruled that Mrs Vaughan was unfairly dismissed.

HIV all-clear

More than 1,100 people in Scotland who had to be retested for the AIDS virus were told yesterday that their original results had been accurate. They were among 26,000 to 30,000 people in Britain who had to be retested after equipment used to determine whether they had HIV was found to be faulty. In England and Wales retesting is still being carried out.

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الجمعة 13 أبريل 1996

Edwardian documentary keeps it in the family

■ The Duke and Duchess of Windsor are the subjects of a new television documentary. Alan Hamilton reports

AN ENDURING belief that Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother has harboured a lifelong grudge against the Duchess of Windsor for propelling King George VI unwillingly to the throne, precipitating his untimely death, was challenged yesterday by her grandson, Prince Edward.

Queen Elizabeth, like other members of the Royal Family and household, had been put in an impossible position by her brother-in-law's decision to marry a divorcee, and was never able to acknowledge publicly the existence of the former Wallis Simpson in any way, the Prince said.

The Prince was attending the preview of a two-part documentary on the Windsors that he has written and presented, to be screened later this month. He answered questions on why the programmes almost entirely ignored the riddle of the 1936 abdication, which still intrigues historians: did the then Duchess of York, the future Queen Elizabeth, hate the upstart American?

Prince Edward said: "There are all sorts of stories involving the Queen Mother which I believe are factually inaccurate. She, like every other lady in the household at the time, was put in an utterly impossible position by Edward's decision."

"They were never going to be able publicly to acknowledge her in any way. The inevitable gulf that occurred

has been interpreted by people to say it was a deep-seated and personal matter which, from all that I have discovered, just isn't the case."

The Prince added: "None of the Royal Family was interviewed for these programmes; I did not feel it necessary to put them through that."

In the documentaries, Prince Edward defends his great-uncle against the charges of some historians that he was a Nazi sympathiser or even collaborator. In the first programme he says: "The Duke may have been awkward, selfish and intransigent but there is no evidence

that he would ever betray his country." He said he had found no evidence to support the theory that there had been an official cover-up over the Duke's supposed links with Nazi Germany.

The Prince, having had privileged access to George VI's private diaries, nevertheless makes it clear that the Duke's meeting with Hitler in 1937 caused dismay in London. King and government were furious that the Duke had undertaken the mission, albeit in the hope of persuading Hitler against war, without giving warning in order that he might have been better briefed and ad-

vised. But the Prince asserts that, for all his faults, the Duke of Windsor was utterly loyal and merely laughed when a Spanish emissary acting for the Nazi German regime suggested that Hitler would install him as puppet king of a conquered Britain, with a crown on his head and a swastika on his car.

The documentary details farcical attempts by German and Spanish agents to keep the Duke in Spain during the early years of the war, when he wanted to sail for the Bahamas to take up his post as governor.

Ramon Serrano Suner, Spanish Interior Minister in 1940-42, tells the Prince in the series: "Franco wanted to keep him here because we thought he would be an English king more favourably disposed to Spain. On the other hand Hitler thought he could manipulate him so he could instigate a revolution in England."

The Duke's obsession with minutiae played into the hands of the enemy agents. Unwilling to leave for the Bahamas without his best bed linen, he sent a maid to retrieve the sheets from their Paris house. The maid was captured by German agents and held along with the pillowcases in the hope that the Windsors would miss their boat. They caught it.

□ Edward on TV at 10.45pm on April 23 and 30.



The Duke and Duchess in Berkshire after the war



Prince Edward and the Gerald Brochehurst portrait of Duchess of Windsor

THE true Edward's the Duke of veteran televis. Desmond Wilcox, ilton writes).

Three years ago Wilcox given a tour of the Windsor home in Paris, restored by present owner, Mohammed Fayed. Determined to make a film on the Windsors in exile, Wilcox approached Prince Edward with the suggestion that he might like to write and narrate the programme. The Prince immediately agreed.

"What has raised the status of this particular programme is that it is an important story from recent history, being shown on the sixtieth anniversary of the abdication," Prince Edward said yesterday.

The programme's real origins will do little to dispel criticism that Ardent Productions has ridden unashamedly on the back of its royal connections, despite the Prince's declarations when the television company was set up in 1993 that it would stand on its own two feet. He is joint managing director with Eben Foggitt, a former BBC TV drama executive. His next major project is a documentary about Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.

Other programmes have included an edition of the motoring programme Top Gear for the BBC and Annie's Bar, the poorly received Channel 4 comedy.

Son explains why he ended patient's pain

BY BILL FROST

AN ELDERLY cancer victim died after her son gave her a massive dose of medical heroin "to ease her agony". Last night the man called for new laws to allow mercy killing as police investigated the death.

Alice Rowbottom, aged 80, was unable to eat, drink, move or speak without crying when her family saw her last Wednesday at North Manchester General Hospital. Her son Derek said: "I knew my mum would not leave me like that if I was in agony."

His mother as on a drip of diamorphine (pharmaceutical heroin) to counter the pain "so I kept pressing the button on the pump to administer more intravenous drugs. I just wanted to keep her out of pain and let her pass away peacefully. I don't think she even knew who I was at the end."

Mr Rowbottom, 44, from Ashton-under-Lyne, said: "The diamorphine was being pumped into her stomach through a box. I had seen another patient in a corridor with one of these boxes and he showed me the pump booster button. When no one was looking I pressed the button on my mum's box so the drug would go in as quickly as possible. I asked the nurse for more because she was still in pain, then I emptied the new supply as quickly as I could."

The nurse saw me doing it then asked me to stop, but I wouldn't. She called the sec-

urity men and the police and I didn't administer any more. My mum had taken all the diamorphine I could give her and she was completely rested, in no more pain."

The next day Mr Rowbottom was contacted by the hospital and told his mother's condition had deteriorated. She was dead by the time he arrived at her bedside.

"The following day the police came to see me and said they understood there was a high level of diamorphine in my mother's blood and they wanted to ask me about it. I told them, 'Look I know what I've done and I would do it again'. I know she would have done the same for me if I had been in her situation. I sat down with my mum and I said I'm sorry. I just wanted to help her. There was nothing else I could do."

"If what I have done helps change the law or helps anyone else, then that is good. I want the law changed to make things easier for patients and relatives of patients to end their suffering."

Mr Rowbottom's wife Jennifer said: "The law is crazy. I would want Derek to do the same thing for me in that situation."

A police spokesman said that Mrs Rowbottom's death had been reported to the coroner, who had asked for an investigation. No arrests had been made.



Alice Rowbottom and her son Derek: police called

Man who 'dispensed' cannabis goes free

BY GILLIAN BOWDITCH
SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

A MAN who gave away cannabis to chronically sick people in a Scottish fishing port escaped a jail sentence when the judge learnt of his care for his sick wife, Martinus Van der Lee, 50, who works with the disabled, was sentenced to three years' probation yesterday after he admitted supplying and possessing the drug.

Van der Lee started giving cannabis to his wife, Kathleen, who was seriously injured in a car accident five years ago, to ease her suffering. The crash had left her with a mental age of 8, violent shakes, a speech impediment and severe mood swings. Van der Lee claimed his wife's shaking stopped and the mood swings eased.

The former merchant navy chef was open about what he was doing and word spread in Peterhead, Grampian. He started giving the drug free to the sick and dying. It was used to alleviate cancer, multiple sclerosis and glaucoma.

His activities came to a halt when police caught him with 1.5kg of cannabis in his car. In total, he had £10,000 worth of the drug in his possession.

Yesterday in the High Court in Inverness, Van der Lee admitted illegal possession and being concerned in the supply of several kilos of cannabis throughout the Highlands and Islands.

The judge, Lord Johnston, told him: "This is a very difficult case. I can understand your motive and I follow what you were trying to do but I cannot condone it. Normally I would send you to prison but in these very special circumstances, and taking your wife into account, I believe what you did was more stupid than wicked."

Later, Van der Lee said he would continue rolling cigarettes for his wife but they would be made from tobacco. "This is the end of my involvement in drugs. I have been given the opportunity to stay with Kathleen and I won't let the judge down."

Payout to vandal overturned

BY TIM JONES

A BUSINESSMAN who defended his country home against attack by stone-throwing youths from a nearby council estate had his conviction for common assault and criminal damage overturned yesterday.

David Verney, 54, jumped into his Range Rover and drove out of his moated home to chase two youths after he heard the sound of breaking glass in his greenhouse, Gloucester Crown Court was told. Mr Verney, a property developer from Uckington, near Cheltenham, threatened

to report the boys to the police but instead found himself in front of Colford magistrates in January. They gave him an absolute discharge, but ordered him to pay costs of £200 and £40 compensation to one of the boys to replace a ripped football shirt.

Mr Verney, whose wife Barbara is a magistrate at Cheltenham, won his appeal against conviction when Michael de Navarro, QC, the Recorder, stopped the case. He said that Wayne O'Shea, 14, the alleged victim, and another boy, aged 13, had given conflicting evidence on which no court could convict.

He awarded Mr Verney costs for the magistrates' court and appeal hearings.

The court was told that Mr Verney, a former army and Gloucester county rugby player, caught up with the boys, grabbed one by his shirt, marched him across to another group and demanded to know the names of the others. A police officer to whom the youths complained said that she went to Mr Verney's home but could find no damage to his greenhouse. She described his attitude as obnoxious. Later, another officer found two broken panes and some stones.



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The Ostrich Monarch

She has ruled for as long as most of us can remember, yet we know her scarcely at all. As the queen approaches 70, the award-winning writer William Shawcross investigates the enigma at the heart of Britain

News Review — The Sunday Times tomorrow

Schools may reject pupils if parents oppose discipline

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

SCHOOLS are to be allowed to turn down pupils whose parents refuse to accept policies on discipline, Gillian Shephard said yesterday.

The Education and Employment Secretary is also planning legislation in the autumn to give schools the same powers as the police to detain children. This would end the right of parents to stop schools from using detention beyond school hours as a punishment for unruly children.

Mrs Shephard, in a speech to the annual conference of the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers in Glasgow, promised laws to force parents to take more responsibility for the behaviour of their children. There would be sharper penalties for the parents of persistent truants, and those whose children have been expelled twice could lose their right to choose a school.

She refused to say what the penalties for parents of truants

might be, but government advisers have called recently for parents to be fined or lose state benefits if they cannot teach their children to behave.

"Some of these measures will be possible through new guidance," she said. "In other areas legislation will be necessary and we will provide it."

The Labour Party said last week that it would allow schools to suspend pupils for a term. In an apparent attempt to match this pledge, Mrs Shephard indicated that she would allow schools to exclude pupils for 45 days at a time instead of the current maximum of 15 days a term.

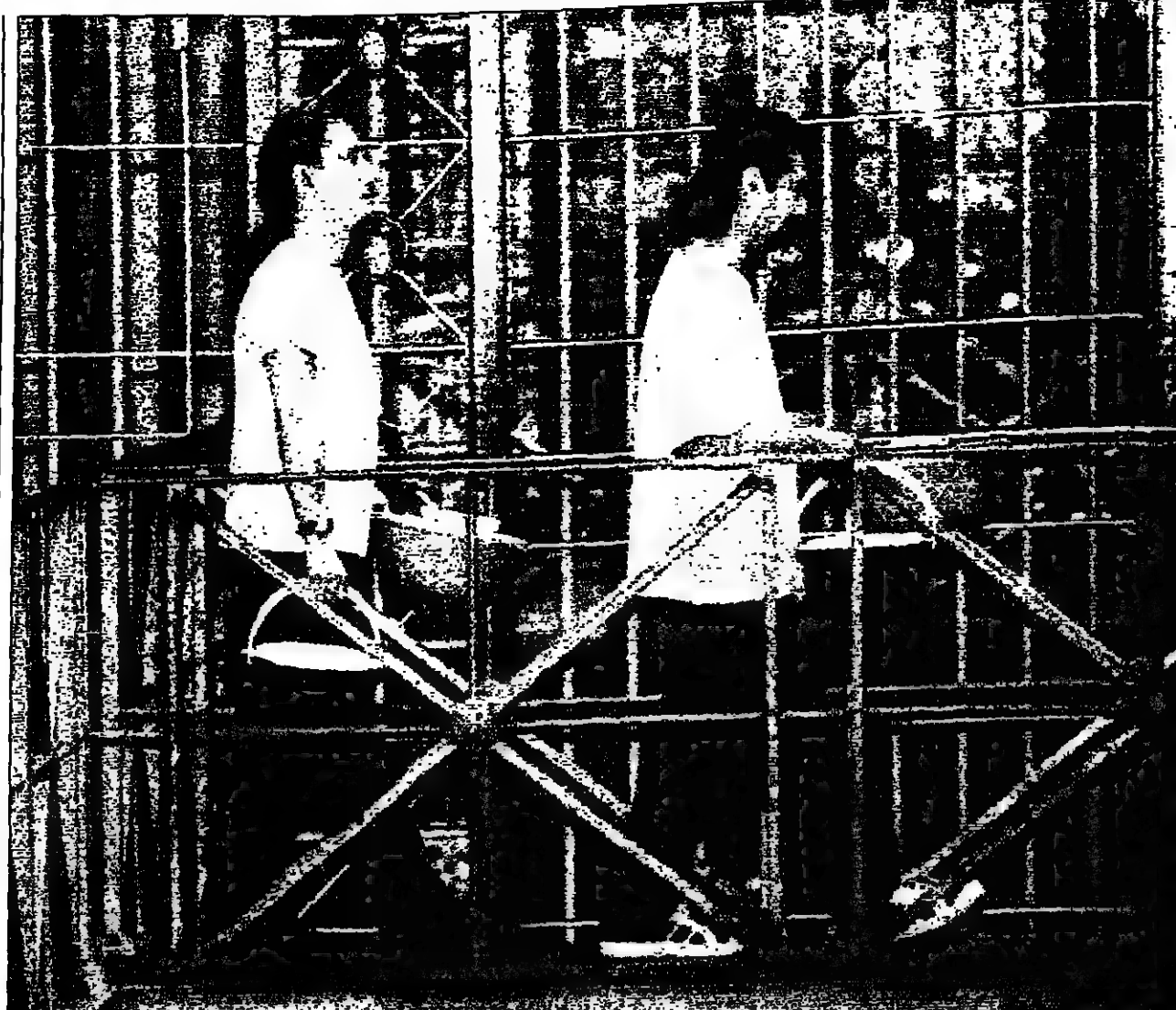
She said: "Without an orderly atmosphere in the classroom, effective teaching and learning cannot take place. Teachers should not have to put up with violent pupils who disrupt lessons."

Later she said: "We need to look at linking parents' wishes with requirements for good, acceptable behaviour. The

majority of parents are supportive to schools and their children, but where they are not there needs to be a reminder of their responsibilities."

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the union, welcomed the recent attention to school discipline from Labour and the Conservatives but said that tougher measures were needed years ago. Last year a survey found that as many as 15,000 youngsters were being expelled every year.

The union favours more pupil referral units, or "sin-bins", to rid classrooms of unruly children. "Everyone asserts the child's right to an education, but I would challenge that," Mr de Gruchy said. "If they break their contract with a school they should forfeit that right. No one wants to send these children into limbo, but I do not want my members and the majority of children to remain in hell because of disruptive pupils."



Inmates at Armley prison in Leeds slopping out for the last time. One said: "We've got a lot more dignity now"

From April you must get into this routine

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How to avoid penalties

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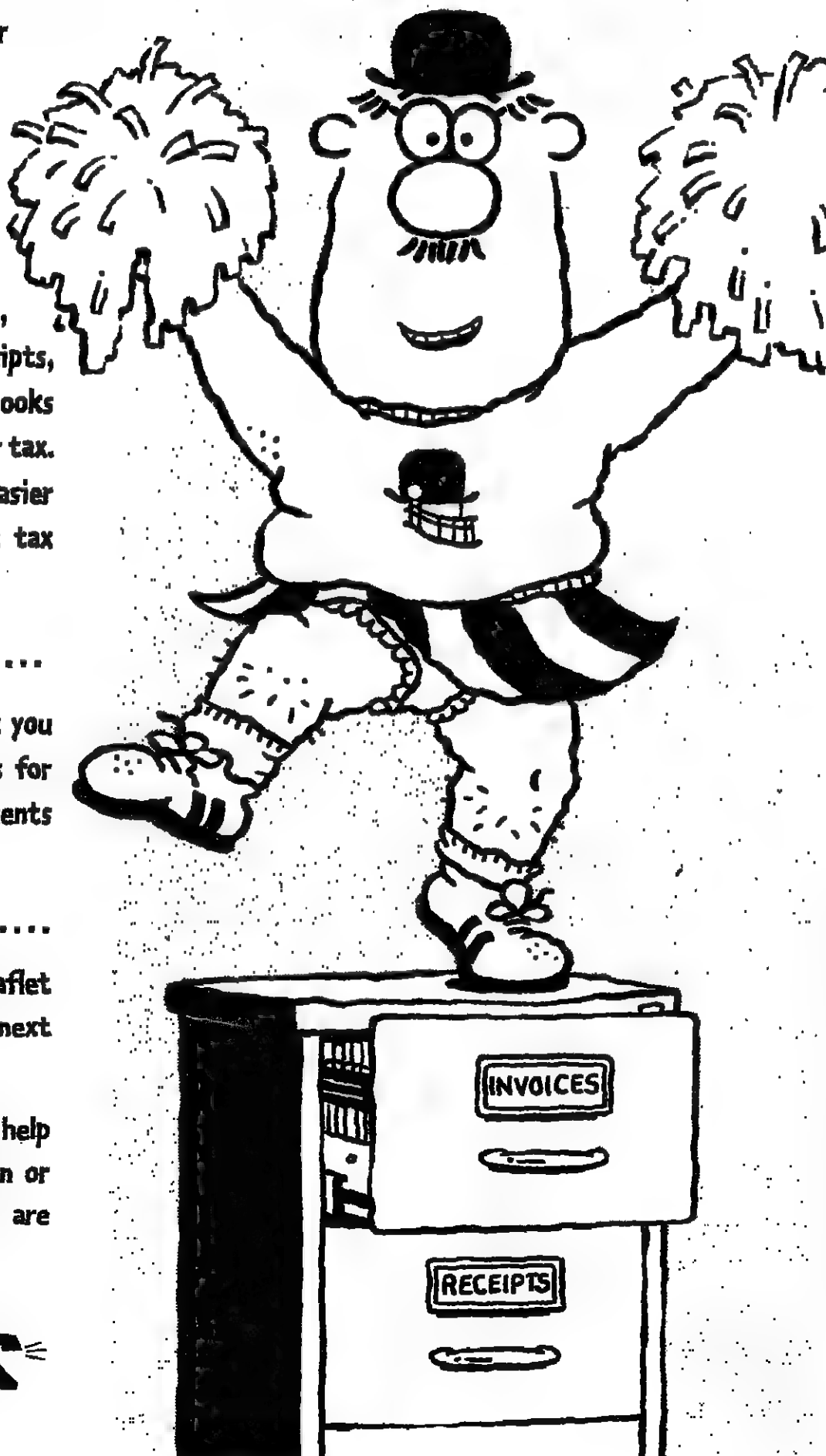
To find out more, look out for the special leaflet on Self Assessment we've included with your next tax return.

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Inmates slop out for the last time

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

INMATES at Armley jail ended a prison ritual yesterday when they slopped out for the last time.

Ann Widdecombe, the Prisons Minister, was in the Leeds jail to mark the completion of a £60 million programme to install sanitation in cells in 135 jails in England and Wales.

The drive to end slopping out, a target of penal reformers, was only six weeks short of a deadline recommended by Lord Woolf in 1991. Until he recommended speedy action to end the practice, the Home Office had not expected slopping out to end in jails until the next century.

Glenn, an Armley inmate, said integral sanitation had improved morale for everyone. He added: "Before, you had to make sure you had been to the toilet before banging up time because after that you had to use the bucket and slop out with everyone else the

next morning. Now we've got our own toilet and sink. It's much cleaner and we've got a lot more dignity."

Since 1991 more than 20,000 toilets and washbasins have been installed in 96 institutions. Some cells at Armley have both. In other parts of the jail three cells have been turned into two with a bathroom in the centre.

Miss Widdecombe said the prison service had "reached a milestone in history". She added: "One of the prisoners just said slopping out is prehistoric and he is quite right."

Ironically Victorian prisons had cell sanitation but much of it was ripped out this century to provide more space for prisoners. Stephen Shaw, of the Prison Reform Trust, said: "They missed their target by six weeks but this is still a remarkable achievement."

Victim's pain, page 8

Overhaul of mental care urged by charity

By ADRIAN LEE

THE mental health charity SANE yesterday called for an overhaul of community care legislation after a series of crimes involving former patients. The Mental Health Act needed updating to protect patients and the public, Marjorie Wallace, the charity's chief executive, said.

Far too many mistakes were being made under the current laws, introduced 13 years ago, Ms Wallace said. SANE is seeking new criteria on the discharge of mentally ill patients, and more involvement in the process for their families. The group also wants consideration given to the feelings of victims.

Ms Wallace said: "Because of all the headline cases involving a minority of violent patients, everyone who is mentally ill is finding it harder to be accepted into the community."

SANE, which handles 1,000 telephone calls a week from people seeking help, is to extend its support service and employ a lawyer on cases. It will write to every MP to seek support for its campaign.

Ms Wallace said that in the past year there had been 24 mishandled cases that had resulted in inquiries.

Lawyers told to cut down on sentences

By PETER FOSTER

THE legal profession, master of the sub-clause and the 60-word sentence, was told to get to the point yesterday by the Plain English Campaign. It condemned words such as "aforementioned" and "hereinafter" as old-fashioned and cumbersome.

Christie Maher, the campaign's director, said: "Lawyers are frightened to say what they mean. People need to be able to understand what has been written on their behalf. It's nonsense to say that everything has to be written in fancy English."

The campaign has produced a book, *Language on Trial*, to help lawyers to overcome the urge to write jargon. "With respect to 'shrinks to about' for the purpose of 'becomes to' and 'at this point in time' is 'now'."

Richard Thomas, director of public policy at the international law firm Clifford Chance, said that lawyers were no longer quite the windbags they once were. However, he added: "Too many lawyers write to impress others inside the profession. Good legal writing should not look as if it is written by a lawyer at all."

Steady on, take a drink

By NICK NUTTALL

IT MAY not be news to some darts and snooker players, but scientists have found that alcohol helps to steady the hand.

Researchers from Birmingham and Edinburgh universities suggest that up to four units of alcohol is the magic amount for keeping hand tremors under control — although "next morning someone might shake more than before".

The findings, disclosed at the Edinburgh Science Festival, suggested that as an alternative, teetotalers could

put their hands under running water from the cold tap. This had improved the aim of Olympic pistol shooters, and helped to improve life for people suffering from diseases such as Parkinson's.

The study measured the hand tremors of thousands of people. In religious groups, Church of Scotland ministers were found to suffer more than nuns or Muslims.

Medical students and general practitioners emerged as the slice of the population with the shakiest hands. Journalists and eye surgeons, thankfully, had low tremor scores.

John Prescott claims to be upwardly mobile. Eight social commentators measure his progress

Labouring the point: just what is a class act?

John Prescott, the no-nonsense voice of the Labour Party, yesterday announced his defection to the middle classes. In an unguarded moment he told Radio 4's Today programme: "I can tell you, I'm pretty middle class." Yesterday *The Times*

endeavoured to find out just where Mr Prescott, former merchant navy steward, stood on the social scale. We asked academics, social commentators and advertising gurus to define class differences and assess Mr Prescott's position.

BEING working class is no longer a badge of honour in Labour Party politics, according to Ben Pinchot, Professor of Politics at Birkbeck College and biographer of Harold Wilson. "Once Labour MPs could not resist mentioning their grandparents' working-class roots. But the move away from that is symptomatic of the move towards American-style politics. In America the middle-class is the equivalent of our working class."

Professor A.H. Halsey, author of *Social Class and Educational Opportunity*, said: "Of course John Prescott is middle class. You have to

define class by people's present position. But that doesn't mean that he can forget that his origins lie somewhere else. The same applies to about a third of the population. We need a more subtle definition of class which recognises that duality."

One Labour MP, at least, is still proud to be working class. Ken Purchase, a former tool-maker and now MP for Wolverhampton North East, said: "Maybe not by income, but by attitude I am definitely working class."

Dame Barbara Cartland was once asked in a radio interview if she thought class

barriers were breaking down. "Of course they are, my dear," she replied. "Otherwise I wouldn't be talking to you." Yesterday she said: "Nobody cares about class any more. You can be anything you like these days. I think it is dreadful because people have such appalling manners."

"As far as I am concerned someone of good class is someone who keeps their word, is charming and behaves like a gentleman. But England is so rude. We have lost the majesty of smartness, people are so scruffy and even the Royal Family are not as royal as they might be."

She said she still believed herself "very much upper class". Her household addresses her with her title.

Her fellow novelist, Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare, said: "I have always thought John Prescott to be rather upper class, with his Jaguars, double-breasted suits and holidays in Barbados. I think it is wonderful he has said this. Next thing he will announce he is voting Conservative."

Tony Parsons, presenter of the BBC2 programme *Parsons On Class*, said: "It just proves that there is no longer any shame in admitting you are middle class. If John Prescott claimed to be working class it wouldn't make him a champi-



Beer bottles to the fore. John and Pauline Prescott enjoying the glitz of a comedy awards presentation evening

on of the people, it would make him a hypocrite.

"He has two homes and earns nearly £40,000 a year: he is middle class. The class you were born into isn't necessarily where you stay. The middle class covers such a broad spectrum now, from Mr Patel at the corner shop to a barrister."

Michael Young, a sociologist and director of the Institute of Community Studies, said: "Mr Prescott would not be regarded by many as pukka middle class because he was born into a working-class family, but under tradi-

tional guidelines, since he was not a manual worker, he could call himself middle class."

"Forty years ago Labour MPs would have been stressing their working classness. Now things have moved the other way and they are more inclined to call themselves middle class."

"Class was always something that was in people's minds. It is a subjective notion and if someone says they are working or middle class who is going to say otherwise?"

Generally the working and middle classes were defined by manual and non-manual

jobs, but in the 1950s it was the working classes who saw themselves as the real workers, the bedrock of the country. They were proud of it and actually saw themselves as superior to non-manual workers.

"Over the past few decades there has been a decline in the number of manual jobs and an increase in jobs in the service industry which has eroded boundaries and made the picture more confused. People might be on very low incomes — such as parsons — but they would still categorise themselves as middle class, so

we cannot use pay as a yardstick. It comes down to what people think they are."

Ivor Spencer, who runs a school for butlers, said: "The class system certainly exists and we will never have a classless society in Britain. How ever much money you have there are still clubs you can't get into. There is a them-and-us situation."

He said that he knew people, with "new money", who employed a butler to give the appearance of belonging to a higher class. "You can't buy class, it is something you are born into."

Education is the key to social position

By Stephen Farrell

ADVERTISERS, famous for their division of the population into alphabetic and numeric classes, would summarise John Prescott as an aspirer.

"Middle-class is broadly meaningless," said Paul Tivy, group chief executive of the advertising agency Bates Dorland. "The most important determinant of behaviour is educational background rather than disposable income."

"Yes, we would classify him [John Prescott] as middle-class by his purchasing habits, his house and car and the fact that he persisted with his education. But attitudinally I would have thought, before today, he would shudder at the idea of being middle class."

John Prescott epitomises the good old-fashioned Labour Party Socialist in a party more and more overtly middle class under Tony Blair.

Social class definitions:

- A Professionals: chartered people; high-ranking service people.
- B Those with a large amount of responsibility, such as middle management, lecturers.
- C1 All others doing non-manual jobs, such as nurses and police sergeants.
- C2 Skilled manual workers who served apprenticeships.
- D Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers, labourers.
- E Those of lowest levels of subsistence, such as pensioners and the unemployed.



The Prescotts' constituency house in Hull

The 11-plus failure who worked his way up decks

JOHN PRESCOTT was the eldest of five children and attended Brinsworth Primary School, Rotherham.

The family lived in rented accommodation until he was 11 when his parents bought their first home, which was in Chester.

After leaving school in 1953 he worked as a trainee chef in hotels for two years, joined the Labour Party in 1956 and went to work on passenger shipping lines scrubbing decks in 1955 before becoming a steward.

When he returned to dry

land he was sponsored by Cheshire County Council to study for a diploma in economics and politics at Ruskin College, Oxford. He went on to Hull University where he gained a BSc in economics. He became an MP in 1970, sponsored by the National Union of Seamen.

The deputy Labour leader had left school without any qualifications. He went to a secondary modern in Ellesmere Port, having failed the 11-plus.

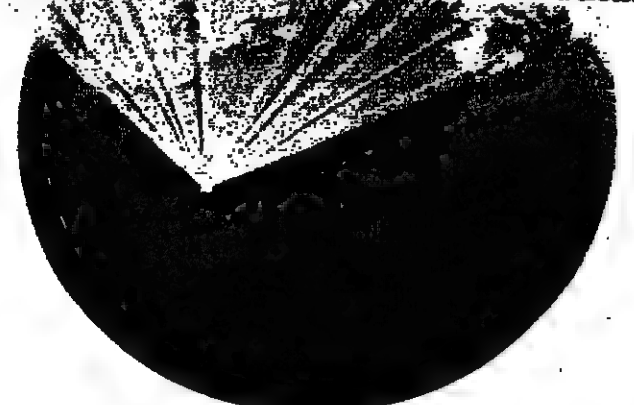
His two sisters and two brothers, who were younger,

all went to grammar school. Their mother Phyllis, who has remarried and is a Labour party member, taught needlework.

Mr Prescott bought his house near the village of Sutton for £28,000 in the early 1970s but it is now valued at around £100,000.

He drives a second-hand Daimler, spends most of his holidays in the Caribbean, with his wife Pauline, a former hairdresser, whom he married in 1961. She is a full-time housewife and MP's wife. They have two sons.

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Psychological Society conference told of first study into long-term effects of accident on children

Suicide and illness haunt survivors of sea disaster

REPORTS BY DOMINIC KENNEDY

CHILDREN who survived a sea disaster in Greece eight years ago are more likely to have considered suicide or suffered mental illness than classmates who remained in Britain, according to one of the largest studies of adolescent disaster survivors.

Of 400 pupils rescued from *SS Jupiter*, a cruise ship that sank in a Greek harbour in 1988, more than two thirds have suffered mental illness and 52 per cent had post-traumatic stress disorder, the British Psychological Society annual conference in Brighton was told yesterday. The schoolwork of survivors suffered and they were three times more likely than their peers to become depressed. One survivor took her life and 9 per cent of her companions have attempted suicide.

The Institute of Psychiatry study shows for the first time the long-term effects of such a disaster on children. The findings emerged in interviews

with survivors, now in their early twenties, and a group of their peers.

Stephanie Boyle, a researcher at the Institute of Psychology, London, said: "A lot of mothers reported 'a child of mine went away and I got back an adult'. The children returned with a feeling that the world was dangerous and serious. They were much more cynical and worldly wise. The loss of innocence is quite notable because they were relatively young."

Survivors told researchers: "I don't really trust anybody any more, I don't believe what people tell me." Dominic O'Ryan, Ms Boyle's colleague, said: "Some no longer plan for the future because they feel the future can be cut short."

The *SS Jupiter* had just set sail from Piraeus harbour with nearly 400 English children aged 14 and 15 on board for a week-long educational cruise. The liner was rammed

amidships by the freighter

DEPRESSION

Adige, rapidly took on water and sank within 40 minutes. Four people died — a pupil and teacher from Birmingham and two Greek seamen. The Medical Research Council is paying £300,000 for three years of research into the long-term effects on survivors.

Although all the children were offered counselling, fewer than a fifth accepted. Of 158 interviewed, 14 per cent had suffered post-traumatic stress disorder with symptoms including flashbacks, panic attacks and avoidance of anything related to the trauma.

Julie Nurrish, a researcher, said results showed a delay of a year or more in the academic studies of those survivors in higher education. "They are not fulfilling their potential."

□ The police misunderstand the rave culture, believing ravers to be young innocent victims rather than willing participants, according to

Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education psychologists who interviewed four police officers and four ravers. The police see others involved with the rave scene as largely consisting of drug dealers and those who organise and otherwise make a profit from ravers.

Ravers see themselves as rational, acting through choice but outside mainstream society, which they perceived as hostile and ignorant of rave. "This is important because, to police raves in an effective and humane manner, the police need to understand the culture they are dealing with," the researchers said.

□ Serial killers usually murder their first victim close to home, psychologists from Liverpool University said. "There is a certain amount of impulse involved in all these crimes, even the most deliberate." More serial criminals have burglary on their records than sexual crimes.

Victim's pain, page 8



Survivors from the *SS Jupiter* leaving a rescue ship

Today's Caveman pays high price for macho style

MALES with high levels of testosterone fare worse at school, often opt for a life of crime and are more likely to have a broken marriage by the age of 40. Psychologists have found that chauvinism, sexism and aggression — Caveman values — are thriving in Britain just as they flourished in primitive societies.

Caveman values are more prominent among delinquents, rapists and men who drink and drive, use alcohol and drugs, have more sex but use fewer condoms and are unsympathetic to women who are victims of sexual aggression.

There are still plenty of New Men, however, who agree that "there is too much emphasis on men being tough", "women do not necessarily go for macho-looking males" and "a romantic dinner with your partner is preferable to drinking with the lads".

New Man is probably a student nurse while Caveman is in a job with the fire brigade and the Army. New Man works in an office, in management, or studies psychology, nursing, sociology or social studies. As men get older, they mellow from Caveman into New Man, possibly as a result of education, mixing with women and realising that, in modern society, Caveman values are antisocial and linked to failure.

Caveman believes that it is necessary to be physically and emotionally tough to achieve manhood, which includes not backing away from physical confrontation, not crying, withstanding pain without complaint, approval of male initiation ceremonies and dis-

MALE VALUES

approval of men who fail to meet these requirements.

Research by the University of Central Lancashire found significant numbers of men approved of statements such as "real men don't give up because of fear," and "men who take part in yoga and ballet deserve to be ridiculed". They also agreed that "wife-swapping is fine as long as both men agree", and "real men don't back away from bar-room confrontations".

John Archer, an evolutionary psychologist from the university, told the conference: "They all reflect the notion that manhood is an acquired, rather than an ascribed, status which must be earned by courageous action." His study involved 600 men aged 17 to 45 from the Preston area of Lancashire.

Cavemen are most prevalent in the Army, among the unemployed, amateur soccer players and manual workers including joiners, labourers and drivers. Caveman values were found in uniformed jobs such as the fire brigade, automobile breakdown services and police, engineering and building and masculine sports including American football, rugby and weight training.

Cavemen show an interest in aggressive sports, enjoy danger, view women as sex objects and believe men should be able to hold their drink. "It can be argued that at the root of all this is the notion of proving to others and ones self that you are hard and tough," Dr Archer said.

Ostracism is feared more than beating

BEING sent to Coventry is worse for children than being physically bullied, according to a study of 200 junior and secondary school pupils aged 8 to 12. Those who were psychologically excluded by their peers felt more depressed, lonely, anxious, dissatisfied and worthless than those who were being beaten. Children and their teachers see physical victimisation as the most harmful form of bullying but it may have fewer long-lasting effects, according to psychologists from Keele University.

Studies have shown that children who were socially excluded by their classmates grow up to be depressed, anxious and shy. Boys thought the worst type of bullying was being shunned

BULLYING

by other children while girls thought it was being physically attacked.

Girl bullies tended to prefer psychological techniques against their victims, including sneaking behind their backs, methods that boys also adopted as they grew out of punching and kicking each other.

A tenth of children in the study in North Staffordshire were being bullied.

□ Domestic violence can be predicted by rainfall, according to a study of three years of records from London. Non-domestic violence increases when the weather is warmer, psychologists from Nottingham University discovered.



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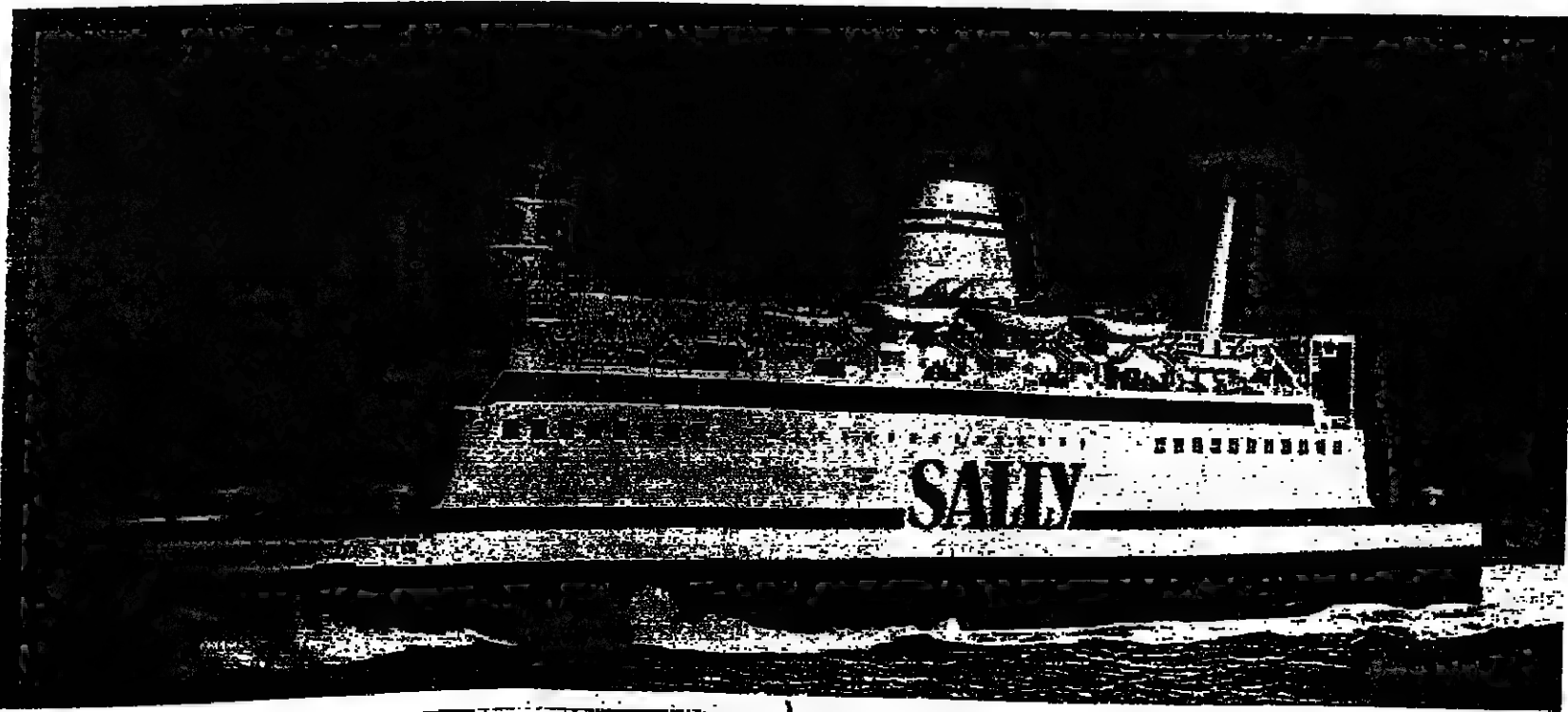
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TIMES1 TIMES2

Howard's proposals criticised

Taylor rejects plan to link jail term and victim's pain

By RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

THE Lord Chief Justice launched a fresh attack on Michael Howard's sentencing proposals yesterday, condemning minimum jail terms as an unwelcome American import. Lord Taylor of Gossforth also spoke against the belief that ever-longer prison sentences would be better for the public and victims of crime.

Lord Taylor unveiled his own proposal to reassure victims of crime. He said that the judiciary should consider the victims' interests when imposing sentences on convicted criminals.

He said police should provide prosecutors with a report of the impact of crimes on the lives of the victims. The prosecution would then be able to put the effects of the crime to the judge for consideration before sentences were passed.

However, Lord Taylor said that the suffering of victims could not be allowed to dictate the length of sentences. He added that it was "quite wrong" to believe that longer and longer sentences would somehow be better for the public and would help to curb crime.

He told the *Today* programme on BBC Radio 4: "The notion that if you sentence longer and longer and longer it's going to be better and better for the public is quite wrong. The public has an interest in seeing that people are rehabilitated and, of course, they should



Lord Taylor: condemned ever longer sentences

be punished appropriately. "But the idea that because a particular victim has suffered very severe injuries, let us say, there must be absolutely comparable injury or detention on the perpetrator is, I think, inappropriate."

Later, in his first public comments since a government White Paper announced minimum sentences for repeat burglars and drug dealers and automatic life sentences for second-time sex and violent offenders, the Lord Chief Justice reopened the argument between the judiciary and the Home Secretary over sentencing.

He described minimum sentences, a key part of the Government's plans to deal with offenders who commit several domestic burglaries and dealers in Class A drugs, as an "importation from the American legal system which we can well do without."

Although his speech to a Victim Support event in his

native Newcastle upon Tyne made no mention of Mr Howard, it was clear that the Home Secretary was his target.

He said that to treat crime solely from the point of view of victims risked looking at the system "through the wrong end of the telescope". Lord Taylor spoke against making the "highly fashionable error" of viewing the criminal justice system primarily as a matter of sentencing.

The typical reaction of most of the population was that sentences were too lenient. Lord Taylor said. A recent survey by the Nuffield Foundation had found that half the public thought that 50 per cent or fewer convicted rapists were sent to prison, when in fact the correct figure was 91 per cent.

With the Government and the judiciary preparing to argue the merits of the White Paper proposals, Lord Taylor conceded that sentencing was a matter of acute public concern. He welcomed debate on the subject as entirely healthy in a mature democracy, while emphasising that it should be an "informed" argument.

Mr Howard's White Paper predicts that 12 jails will have to be built to cope with the minimum 10,800 increase in prison population resulting from his tough new sentences. Lord Taylor told his audience that "in the current stampede to build new prisons", he hoped the continued funding for Victim Support would not be forgotten by the Government.



The card was criticised for encouraging drunkenness

£3,000 for the first card of Christmas

By OLIVER AUGUST

A PROOF copy of the world's first Christmas card fetched £2,990 at auction yesterday. An American collector bought the 1843 card, which sparked an industry worth £300 million last year.

It shows three generations toasting the health of an absent friend, a scene criticised by some Victorians for encouraging drunkenness. The message reads: "A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to You."

The card was designed by John Calcutt Horsley for the reformer and educationist Sir Henry Cole. Sir Henry had 1,000 copies printed to send to family and friends.

He kept only two proof copies. In 1965 he sent one to his daughter Henrietta and the other, inscribed "The first Christmas card", to Lady Dorothy Nevill, who was related to Horace Walpole.

Lady Dorothy, a distinguished hostess, author, gardener, painter and collector, died in 1913. The card was among a collection of her memorabilia put up for sale yesterday at Christie's by a descendant.

Also sold were two locks of hair from the head and beard of Edward IV. An American buyer paid £517 for the two locks, taken from the king when his tomb in Windsor was opened in 1789.

A unique block of ten Penny Black stamps, ranked among the world's top ten rarities, is being offered for sale at £300,000. The block was issued on May 6, 1840, the date of the introduction of stamps. It will be the centrepiece of the Stamp '96 Exhibition at Wembley Conference Centre this month. The sale is being handled by Stanley Gibbons.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Inquiry into fatal slide accident

The death of a three-year-old who caught her neck between the top of a slide and a metal support has prompted an urgent investigation into the slide's safety. Amy Grieson died on Monday, six days after the incident.

Her mother, Kirsty Docking, 24, of Newcastle upon Tyne, called on the Early Learning Centre to stop selling its large slide, saying it was unsafe because the support bars were immovable. Ian Duncan, the firm's chief executive, said he was urgently seeking more information about the incident before deciding whether to withdraw the model.

Polar freeze-out

Pen Hadow, from Dartmoor, abandoned his attempt to walk solo to the North Pole from Ward Hunt Island, Canada, after breaking a ski and a ski-pole six days into his 480-mile trek. An aircraft is to fly him off the ice cap.

Actress banned

Letitia Dean, the former *EastEnders* star, was fined £750 with £50 costs and banned from driving for 30 months by Tower Bridge magistrates after she admitted driving her sports car on March 1 while double the legal alcohol limit.

Attacker foiled

A woman whose car broke down in north London used an aerosol oil spray to fend off a man who attacked her with a knife. He stabbed her arm and hands but fled when she sprayed WD40 in his face.

Drop of ice

A 60lb block of ice that fell 10,000ft from an aeroplane embedded itself in the ground by the home of Gerald and Jean Redfern in Huddersfield, Derbyshire, under the Manchester airport flightpath.

Beef blocked

The Ministry of Defence is to withdraw ration packs from an Anglo-American exercise in North Carolina because they might contain products that could be construed as breaching the ban on beef exports.

Ferry grounded

The Belgian-owned North Sea car ferry *Prins Filip* ran aground outside the entrance to Ramsgate harbour early yesterday morning, leaving 335 passengers stranded for three hours while the tide rose.

Clean away

Thieves have stolen an outdoor lavatory being exhibited by a Russian at an art show in Limerick. Irish police fear the loan-to, which has been shown around the world, may have been taken for firewood.

Credo

Death holds no sting when we serve our God

Richard Harries

There is a devastating poem by Wilfred Owen, whose first verse reads:

"O Jesus Christ" one fellow sighed. And knelt, and bowed, tho' not in prayer, and died. And the bullets sang "In Vain". Machine guns chuckled "Vain". Big guns guffawed "In Vain".

The refrain that all is in vain runs through the rest of the poem. It is not only the prayers of soldiers but their cries to their parents and their calling out to their loved ones that are all equally useless. It is a pessimism as bleak as that in the

good that we are able to do will be gathered up and preserved for all eternity.

When these words are read at funeral services, as they so often are, few will be able to share Paul's conviction about the Resurrection of the Dead, which is the theme of this whole chapter. For we know that the body decomposes and becomes part of the whole cycle of nature. We cannot imagine ourselves climbing out of graves like figures in a Stanley Spencer painting.

What we can believe as Christians, however, is that though the darkness may close in on us at death, God's knowledge of us does not end at that point. We remain known in his mind and cherished in his heart.

We have very little idea about who we really are. Am I my true self at nine, 10, 39 or 99? Only God knows. And what God knows, our true self, will be reformed or re-dressed in a manner appropriate to eternity. For Christ, is risen and nothing can destroy or take away from our life lived in him.

Much, perhaps most of what we think important about ourselves, will no doubt drop away, being of little significance in the light of the standards of the Kingdom where the last shall be first and the first shall be last.

But all that we do "in the Lord", that is work that is in accord with his will of love, all that is in union with Christ through faith and prayer, all this has a future in God. We have absolutely no idea about the conditions in which this hope will be realised, though our best human experiences might give us some guesses, but this hope is fundamental to Christian teaching. We should give ourselves permission to be liberated by it, so we may indeed abound in the work of the Lord.

□ The Right Rev Richard Harries is Bishop of Oxford.

At Your Service
Weekend, page 13

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Prescott challenges Major to have 'the courage to face Labour' and let the nation decide now

Tories stunned by huge margin of by-election defeat

By James Landale and Arthur Leathley

THE Conservatives had braced themselves for defeat in the Staffordshire South East by-election, but the margin of defeat — 13,762 votes — has shaken the party.

The victory by Labour's Brian Jenkins, who captured the seat with a swing of 22 per cent, delighted John Prescott, the party's deputy leader, who yesterday challenged John Major to hold an immediate general election.

The Tories were unprepared for the scale of their defeat. During the final days of canvassing, Jimmy James, the Tory candidate, was telling all listeners that victory was within reach; but his party colleagues were briefing journalists to expect a defeat of about 5,000 votes.

By the eve of polling, the defeatist message appeared to have filtered through to Mr James, when he emphasised that the seat held by his party since 1983 should not be considered a Tory heartland but a marginal.

The defeat was especially galling as the Tories had fielded one of the most impressive candidates of recent by-elections and had fought the strongest contest since the last general election. Alan Duncan, the Tory MP for Rutland and Melton, proved a ferociously energetic "minder" to Mr James and was tireless in giving Labour as tough a



Jenkins and grandchild Emmeline Saunders

contest on the ground as they have had in recent clashes with the Conservatives.

But while there was less evidence of the bitterness towards the Government that had dominated other recent by-elections, Labour strategists were confident throughout that Conservative voters were switching in droves to back Tony Blair's party.

Mr Jenkins may not have been the most sparkling campaigner, but he was well known as leader of Tamworth Borough Council and was supported by a cavalcade of national Labour politicians, including Mr Blair, who made three visits to the constituency.

Yesterday his deputy was celebrating with party workers in the Midlands constituency. "If the Tories want to, the best way of testing [their support] is to have a general election," Mr Prescott said.

"Has the Prime Minister got the courage to face us? If he thinks he is going to win a general election, let's have it. It's up to him and we are ready and waiting."

He said the constituency's voters had caught the national mood: "The people of south-east Staffordshire said, 'We don't believe you anymore. We've had enough. We feel betrayed and it's time you were out.'"

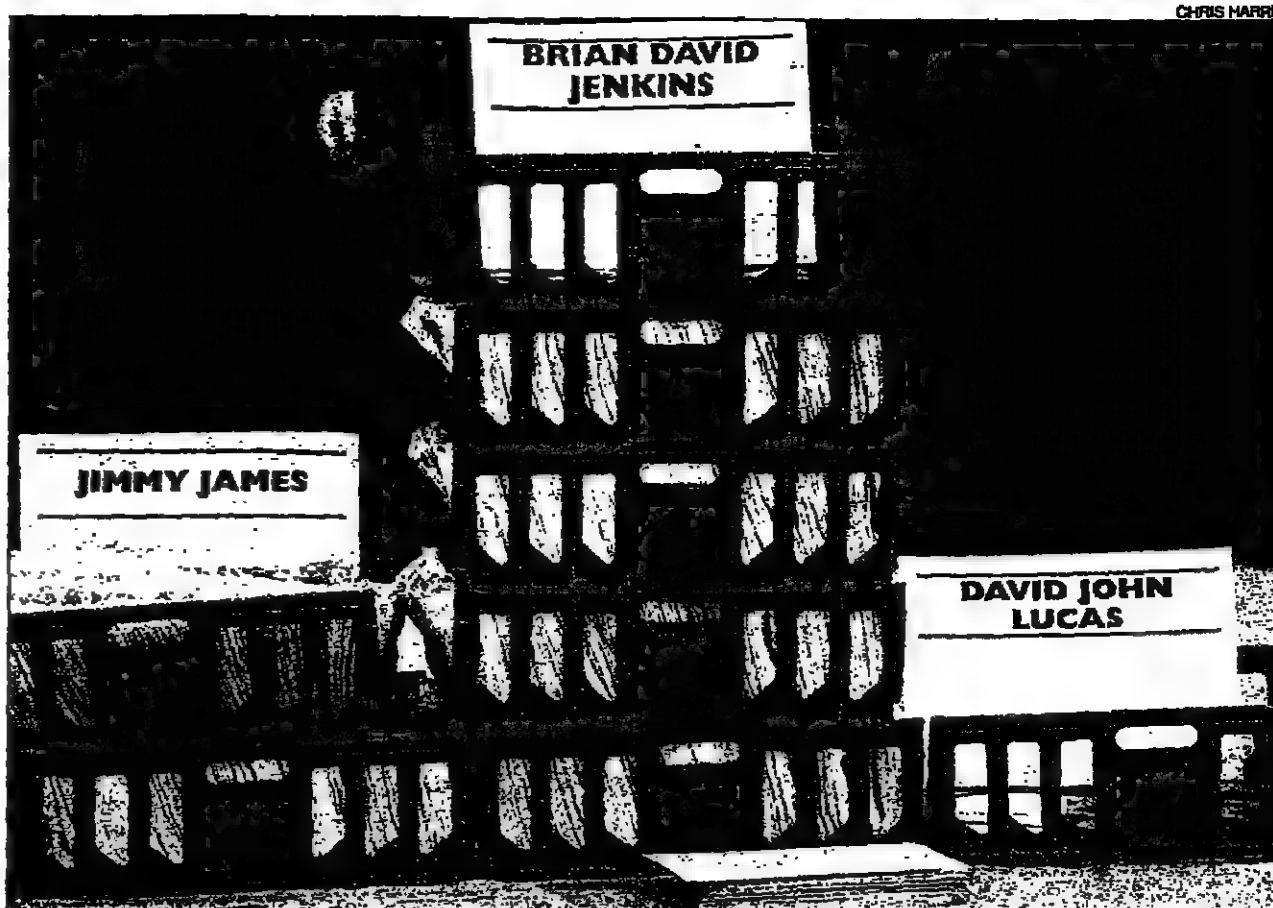
Mr Jenkins said yesterday that the 13,000-plus majority had been beyond even his most optimistic assessment.

"The Tories can use as many excuses and as many reasons as possible," he said. "The simple fact is that they got thumped by the people."

However, Mr James blamed his defeat on several factors: Liberal supporters using a protest vote to back Labour, many Tory voters staying at home, and the "feel-good" factor not yet reaching people's pockets. He also pointed out that the defeat was not as bad as the nearby Dudley West by-election in 1994.

"I thought we had a good chance of winning this seat," he said. "I am obviously disappointed but I respect the decision of the voters. I think the new seat of Tamworth is extremely winnable at the next general election."

John Redwood, page 20
Leading article and
Letters, page 21



The gap between Labour's Brian Jenkins and other candidates was evident at the count from baskets of votes

Making the most of the swing factor

By Arthur Leathley

LABOUR's sweeping by-election victory in Staffordshire South East brought the party its second largest post-war swing, 22 per cent. Only Dudley West in 1994 bettered it with a 29 per cent swing away from the losing Conservatives.

Labour claimed yesterday's result was the bigger triumph, which could not be dismissed as a mid-term protest but which pointed towards deeper Tory disaffection. "This is a crippling result for a Government that knows that a general election may only be months away," one Labour figure said.

Before Dudley, Labour's biggest post-war swing had been the modest 12 per

cent when it took the Vale of Glamorgan from the Tories in 1989.

However, the two main parties were yesterday using carefully selected snippets of by-election history to bolster their hopes of victory at the next general election.

Euphoric Labour leaders were comparing the Staffordshire result to the Langbaurgh by-election in November 1991, five months before the last general election, in which Labour took the Conservative seat with a swing of 3.6 per cent. Strategists, contrasting that with yesterday's 22 per cent swing, said it underlined the mountain the Tories must climb to win back the seat.

Conservatives preferred to point to the

Ribble Valley seat, lost to the Liberal Democrats in March 1991 on a 24 per cent swing in the wake of public anger over the poll tax. They won the seat back in the following general election. In 1986, the Conservative seat of Ryedale was lost to the Liberal Alliance but was won back as Margaret Thatcher's Government swept to a 100-seat majority at the 1987 general election.

Before the 1983 general election, the Thatcher Government suffered few by-election reverses. However, it did lose the Glasgow Hillhead seat to Roy Jenkins of the SDP/Liberals in March 1982, then went on to secure a resounding 140-seat majority in the general election in May of the next year.

Balancing act allows Mr President to please rival leaders

BILL CLINTON obviously likes and approves of Tony Blair. But the President has to work with John Major, possibly for another year — and after a rocky start, he has come to respect the Prime Minister and enjoy a reasonable working relationship.

So the White House has engaged a careful balancing act over the visit of Mr Blair to Washington. At the same time on Thursday evening as

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

Hillary Clinton was having a friendly and at times animated 20-minute chat with the Labour leader at a private reception. Mike McCurry, the White House press spokesman, was delivering a deliberately even-handed message about good relations with Mr Major to the reporters travelling with the Labour leader.

The same themes were reiterated yesterday when Mr Blair visited the White House. All this was a carefully coordinated exercise between the White House, the British embassy in Washington and the Labour leader's office.

This twin-tracked approach makes political sense as a balance of preference and

necessity. Not only does Mr Clinton have to deal with Mr Major, but relations are genuinely better than they have been. Resentments caused by the intervention of Tory party officials in the 1992 American campaign are now seen as in the distant past, if not forgotten. More to the point, the differences of 1993 over Bosnia and Northern Ireland no longer exist. There is close agreement about the deploy-

ment of Nato forces at present, rather closer than there might be with a Republican president. There have been no complaints from the British side about the White House's cool treatment of Gerry Adams since the end of the IRA ceasefire.

Mr Clinton and Mr Major also see eye-to-eye on reducing trade barriers across the Atlantic, the Middle East and the present uncertainties

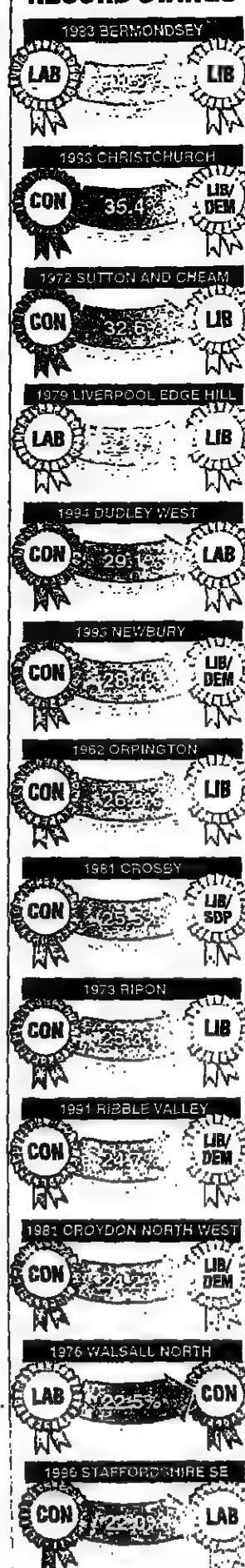
caused by elections in Russia. To emphasise their closeness, British officials point out that the two leaders are meeting in Moscow in a week's time.

These are the necessities of international diplomacy. Politics is different — and the warmth of the greeting offered by President Clinton, and by Mrs Clinton's decision to meet Mr Blair, are clearly intended as friendly signals of political allies. The interest

shown in Mr Blair's visit by the business and media elite is because he is now regarded in America as the Prime Minister in Waiting. Mr Blair has at times appeared stunned by the degree of interest and by the warmth of the reception. It may not win any votes but it shows how political expectations are changing in Washington as well as at home.

PETER RIDDELL

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Letters help to unlock the enigma of Elgar

BY DALYA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

SOME 750 letters by Edward Elgar, in which the composer discusses masterpieces such as *The Dream of Gerontius* and the thrill of being praised by Richard Strauss, are to be sold at auction.

The correspondence, which includes 200 unpublished letters, spans his working life. It was sent to his publishers, Novello, in whose archives it has been stored, and is being sold by an anonymous collector.

It is the most important collection of Elgar's letters to be offered at auction, and will be sold by Sotheby's on May 15. Stephen Roe, head of Sotheby's book department, said: "It is an astonishing survival. Elgar was a really great letter-writer. He wrote from the heart, so honest."

Dr Simon Maguire, music manuscript specialist at Sotheby's, said: "This represents the ultimate Elgar collection, covering the conception, composition, preparation, publication, distribution, performance and reception of all his major works. It is immensely characterful."

The correspondence is not easy to read because Elgar, who lived from 1857 to 1934, often used abbreviations. But his prose is often jokey, and there are drawings, including caricatures of himself.

The earliest letters date from the 1890s, when he

tentatively asked Novello if he "might submit" an overture "for your inspection with a view to publishing it".

In a letter of May 23, 1902, Elgar describes the acclaim he received after the German premiere of *Gerontius*, some months after a disastrous performance in Birmingham, partly marred by an under-rehearsed orchestra struggling with a difficult work. "I understand the thing was a triumph. But I feel rather dazed at the success... Richard Strauss, who never speechifies if he can help it, made a really noble oration over *Gerontius*... and it was worth some years of anguish — now I trust over — to hear him call me Meister." Mr Roe explained: "It had taken Elgar ages to be recognised in England as someone who was of interest."

On August 24, 1910, the composer penned a note asking whether the Austrian-born maestro Fritz Kreisler would be interested in performing his violin concerto in America. "It will never do to have it hacked about by the sort of creatures who play in the States," he joked.

The following spring, frustrated that his composing was not going well, he threatened to terminate his contract with Novello and give up music. "I am now well on in years and have to consider a 'move' and make a new home — under the depressing state of my music I have to reconsider this entirely and shall probably go abroad or to a cottage in the country and leave the musical world entirely." But Elgar had a change of heart and remained with Novello for 15 years until a dispute over the rights for the American publication of *Gerontius*.

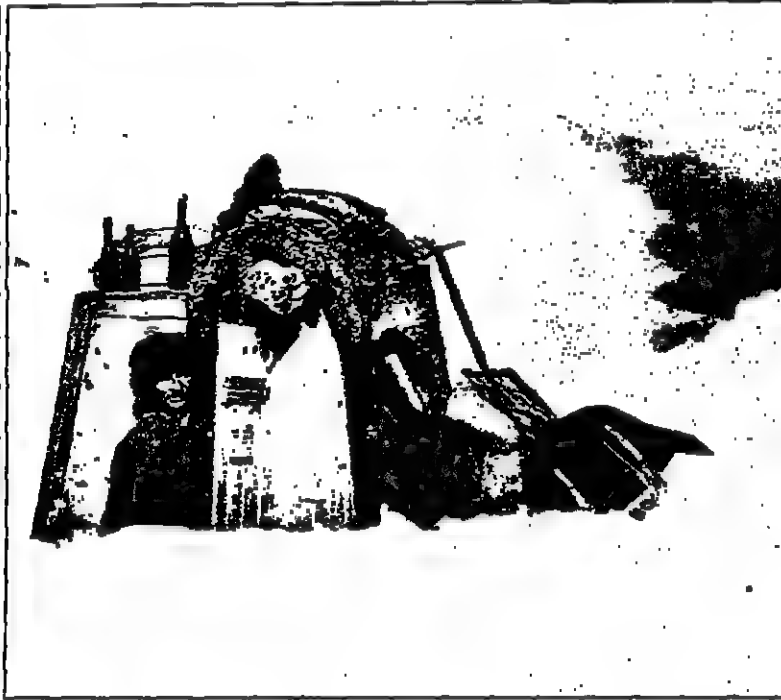
Hugh Cobbe, music librarian at the British Library, said: "We are watching the sale closely. But funds here are terribly restricted. If I could raise the money, I'd go for them like a shot."



Elgar liked to joke and draw caricatures



The high life: William Davidson's *Climbing Party*, from about 1882. Davidson is third from the right. Below are *Unter-Thöodule Glacier and Climbers*, left, photographed by William Donkin in 1879, and *Summit of Mont Blanc*, by Edward Whymper, from about 1894



Victorians scaled the heights of fashion

BY DALYA ALBERGE, ARTS CORRESPONDENT

PHOTOGRAPHS of Victorian mountaineers almost 150 years ago, in cumbersome dresses or tweed suits and deerstalkers, have been rediscovered in an archive in the East End of London.

The original prints and glass-plate negatives dating from 1850 give a unique record of the intrepid Victorians. The British, however ill-equipped for the elements, were the first to popularise climbing in the Alps. The photographs show them with ice-axes, walking-sticks and hob-nailed boots.

The photographs are to be published by Atlas Limited Editions, specialists in historical photography. Half the 34 images have never been published before, most of the others were last published as long ago as the 1930s.

Taking the photographs was no easy feat. The equipment weighed up to 45lb and the glass plates were about 1ft 6in by 2ft. To take the equivalent of a modern roll of film, the photographs could need 25 guides and porters.

The glass-plate negatives were developed on the spot. There were many accidents, including the one in which four of Edward Whymper's colleagues fell to their deaths while roped together on the Matterhorn.

The photographers included the Englishman William Donkin, known as the father of Alpine photography, and the French Bisson brothers, who took the first pictures of Mont Blanc. Chamonix and Zermatt are barely recognisable from the ski resorts they have become today.

The photographs were unearthed from an archive owned by the Alpine Club, founded in 1857 for "the promotion of good fellowship among mountaineers, of mountain climbing and exploration throughout the world, and of better knowledge of the mountains through literature, science and art". Chris Bonington will open an exhibition at the club, in Charlotte Road, Shoreditch, running from Thursday until May 17.

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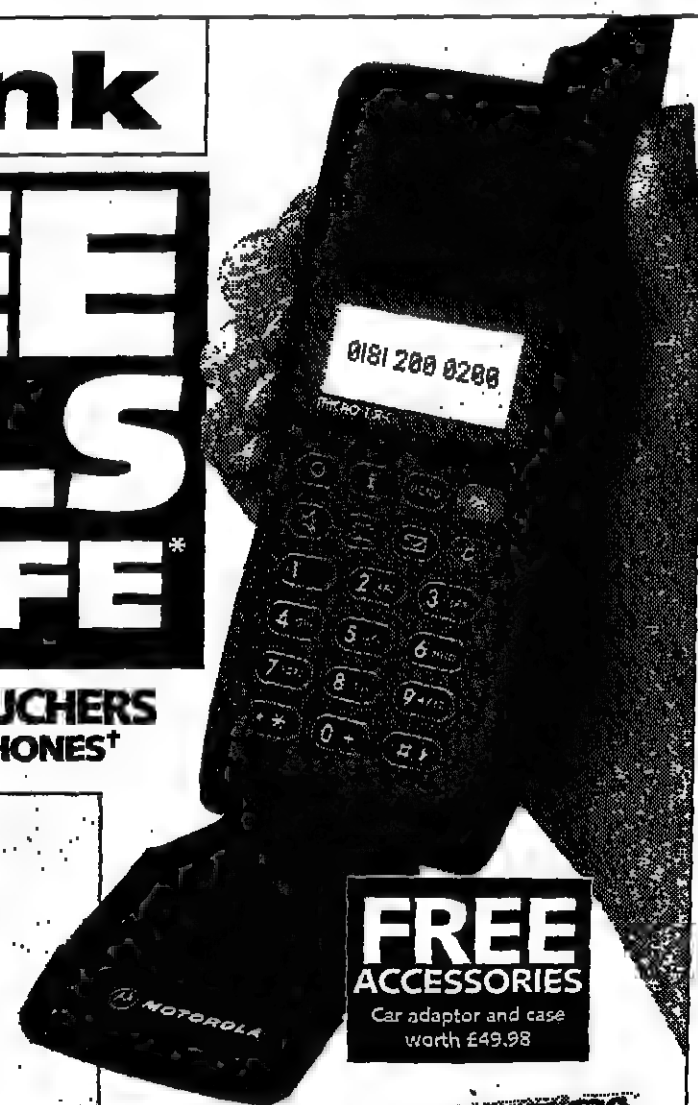
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Hezbollah's Katyushas batter Jewish town for second day

Israelis step up rocket attacks on Lebanon targets

FROM ROSS DUNN IN JERUSALEM

ISRAEL'S war with Islamic extremists in Lebanon intensified yesterday and threatened to draw in other Arab nations after Israeli helicopters hit a Syrian military position in Beirut.

Witnesses said three Israeli helicopters fired rockets at a Syrian anti-aircraft position near Beirut's international airport, in the southern suburbs of the Lebanese capital.

Several Syrian soldiers and civilians were reported wounded in the attack, as Israel apparently tried to strike near a mosque of the pro-Iranian Hezbollah (Party of God), the target of its raids.

Ambulances were reported racing through the city, as the streets emptied, with some observers describing the scene as reminiscent of the civil war in Beirut from 1975-1990 which destroyed the once beautiful city.

Syria has 35,000 troops in Lebanon as the country's main power broker. Israel is holding Syria responsible for allowing Hezbollah to continue rocketing communities in the northern region of the Jewish state. The danger of bringing Syria more directly into the conflict was heightened further after Israel's campaign extended into the Bekaa Valley of eastern Lebanon, where Syria has troops. Thousands of Lebanese were said to be

fleeing north after a threat by Israel to shell the entire region.

Shimon Peres, the Israeli Prime Minister, pledged: "We are not looking to hurt civilians and we have called on them to leave their villages [in the area]." Four civilians were killed and seven others injured during the Israeli attacks on the area yesterday before the evacuation began.

US issues plea to militants

Washington: The White House urged Hezbollah to avoid unnecessary provocation but had no response to yesterday's Israeli retaliation (Tom Rhodes writes). "We are trying to work towards a resolution," said an official, who said contact had been made at ambassadorial level in Syria, Israel and Lebanon.

Eight other people were reported wounded in earlier Israeli air and artillery strikes on south Lebanon, while the

helicopter raids in the Shia Muslim southern suburbs of Beirut reportedly wounded at least another five.

The latest Israeli actions, the second strike against Hezbollah targets in as many days, came after guerrilla fighters with the militant Islamic group fired another barrage of Katyusha rockets. Israel hit back immediately at the suspected sources of the rockets in south Lebanon and Mr Peres said there would be further retaliation after more civilians had left the area. He was speaking during a visit to Kiryat Shmona, one of the Jewish towns struck by the Katyusha rockets. A woman was seriously injured when her car took a direct hit.

Mr Peres, who was accompanied during his tour by General Amos Shahak, the army chief of staff, said: "Hezbollah must understand that it can get nothing using force against Israel." General Shahak accused Hezbollah of a cowardly attack by waiting until Israelis had left their bomb shelters yesterday morning before rocketing the northern region.

In Damascus, hopes were fading last night for a diplomatic breakthrough at a summit due to be held today between President Assad of Syria and his Lebanese counterpart, Elias Hrawi.



Israelis fix firing mechanisms on shells at a Lebanon border base yesterday

'It is easy to reach Beirut, but difficult to leave it'

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

AS ISRAELI missiles pounded the sprawling Shia Muslim slums of Beirut yesterday for the second time in 24 hours, the Israeli Government was reminded of the dangers inherent in stretching its arm of revenge so far.

Writing in Tel Aviv's biggest-selling newspaper, *Yediot Ahronot*, Nahum Barnea, the leading columnist, delivered a sober note to accompany the euphoria of carefully orchestrated government announcements about "smart bombs" and other hi-tech weapons.

"All the wars in Lebanon began

well with videotapes of exploding headquarters and videotapes of our planes returning safely to their bases," wrote Barnea, a commentator who recently lost his 20-year-old son in an Islamic suicide bomb attack in Jerusalem. "The problems occurred later... Experience teaches us that while it is easy to reach Beirut, it is difficult to leave it."

The note of caution was delivered amid ominous signs on both sides that the escalating Arab-Israeli violence of the past two days could soon spread, possibly dragging in Syria or Iran and jeopardising the frail Middle East peace process.

In Israel, Major-General Amiram Levine, the hardline head of Israel's

Northern Command, issued a warning that the return of Israel to an attack-profile not seen since the early days of the 1982 Lebanon War could last for another two weeks. Speaking after meeting leaders of local councils, who live within rocket range of Hezbollah militants in southern Lebanon, the general said: "I told them that patience and fortitude is needed."

The fear among residents of northern Israel was most clearly demonstrated in the southern town of Kiryat Shmona, where nearly half the 23,000 inhabitants fled out of rocket range in buses and cars.

Fuelling the sudden escalation is the fact that in less than two months

Israelis will be voting in a general election in which security is the key issue. "One should not ignore the fact that these incidents are occurring about 50 days before the elections," observed *Haaretz*, the Hebrew daily paper. "No Israeli Government can exist so long as there are protests against it in Kiryat Shmona."

From the Arab side, the entirely predictable response to Israel's nine-hour air attack on Thursday — more rockets targeted on Kiryat Shmona and other places — was followed by more ominous warnings about the conflict spreading well beyond Israel's northern border.

A group known as the Organis-

ation of Oppressed, considered by intelligence experts as a *nom de guerre* for the Iranian-backed Hezbollah, claimed responsibility for the explosion at the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires four years ago and issued a warning that the resumption of air raids on Beirut would provoke more suicide attacks in Tel Aviv and against Jewish and American targets worldwide.

Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, the Hezbollah leader, said: "The response to the air bombing of Beirut will take place at a different place, and we will choose the time and place. When we carry this out, it will stun Peres" (Shimon Peres, the Israeli Prime Minister).

Bomber blows off legs

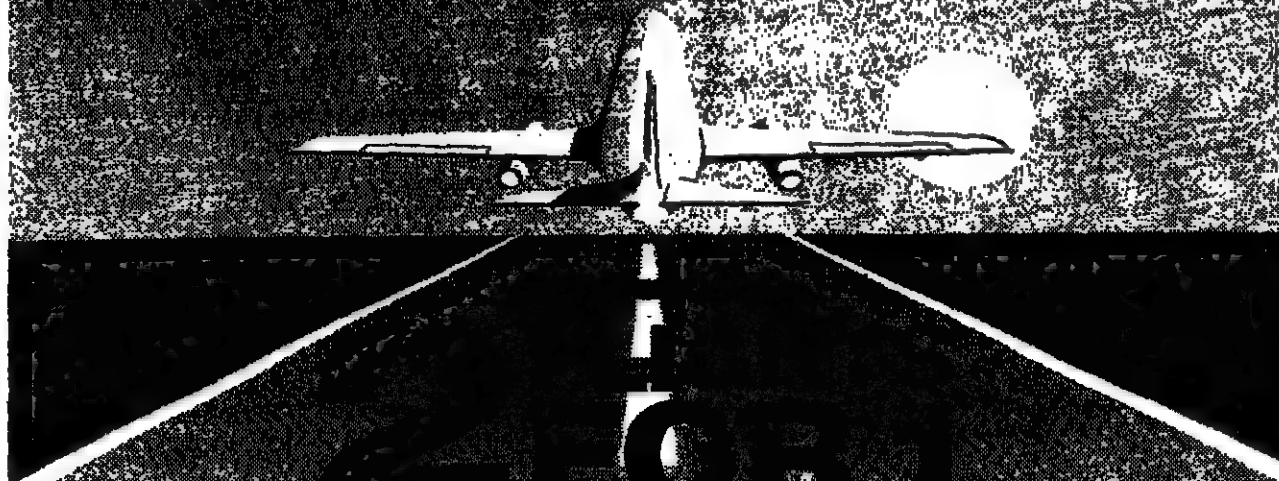
Jerusalem: Israeli police are questioning a man who blew off his legs and right hand as he was preparing a bomb, ripping apart the Jerusalem hotel where he was staying (Ross Dunn writes).

"It was either a bomb or some kind of explosive materials," Arie Armit, Jerusalem's police chief said. Nobody else was hurt.

Hospital staff said that the man's life was not in danger and he was still conscious when police brought him in. It was not clear whether the suspect was a would-be suicide bomber. Publication of his name has been banned.

The charge exploded in the Lawrence Hotel on Salah El-Din Street, the main thoroughfare of east Jerusalem.

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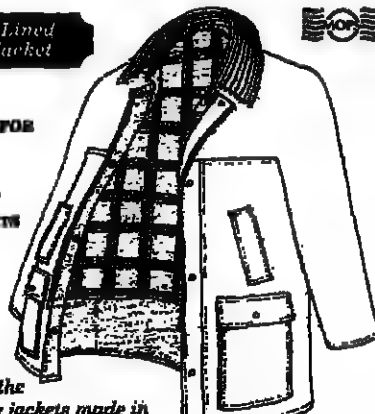


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'Godfather' who relishes a taste for catering



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THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

SATURDAY APRIL 13 1996

Lloyd's ready to improve offer to names

By Sarah Bagnall

LLOYD'S of London is confident of lifting its settlement offer above £3 billion, enabling it to reduce the burden of losses that have fallen on "honourable" names who have paid their debts to the society.

Negotiations with potential contributors to the settlement package, which currently stands at £2.8 billion, are still under way but sources close to the insurance market believe that the sum will be increased by at least £300 million.

A large number of names are angry that they have consistently paid their losses to the market but are worse off under the settlement offer than those names who avoided paying their cash calls. Names who joined action groups in order to litigate will still be deemed "honourable" if they have paid their losses. The total number of names that fall into this category is not known but it is believed to run into several thousand.

The anticipated reduction in many names' bills is the result of the combined effect of the extra funds together with the prospect of a reduction in the amount of money names will have to pay to Equitas, a new reinsurance company that is being set up to take over names' liabilities relating to risks insured before 1993.

Last month, Lloyd's sent out indicative statements to its 34,000 names providing them with estimates of how much they will have to pay to settle finally all their debts with the society.

Lloyd's has lost more than £5 billion in the past five years and the settlement package is an attempt to end a mass of legal actions taken by names.

The indicative statements were based on the assumption that the Department of Trade and Industry would require names to inject £1.9 billion of extra funds into Equitas. This sum is now expected to be reduced to nearer £1.5 billion.

Having taken account of names' reactions to the indicative statements, Lloyd's has identified several groupings to whom it wishes to make a better offer. They include names who cannot meet their final bills to the market.



New leaf: Dieter Bock is intent on divesting Lonrho's mining interests and concentrating on other activities

Germans intensify bid battle for C&W

By Eric Reguly

BRITISH TELECOM is under pressure to strike a merger agreement with Cable and Wireless after the disclosure that Deutsche Telekom, Europe's biggest phone company, is considering bidding for C&W.

The disclosure, made in Frankfurt by Joachim Kroschke, Deutsche Telekom's finance director, is the first official indication that BT's plan to merge with C&W may be challenged. Other large phone companies and consortia are thought to be considering a bid for some or all of C&W, whose interests range from 80 per cent of Mercury Communications to 57.5 per cent of Hong Kong Telecom.

One financial adviser said: "These companies would be negligent if they didn't look at Cable and Wireless. Every serious phone company has to have a presence in the Asia-Pacific market and in the UK, the telecoms hub of Europe."

Similarly, with C&W in play, the board of directors has an obligation to strike the best deal for shareholders. Although BT is the logical partner, C&W would have to give serious consideration to all takeover proposals. The Government has given no indication that it would use its golden share in C&W to block a foreign takeover.

BT has been trying to strike a deal with C&W since late last year. The structure of the proposed merger has been broadly agreed, but the two companies are thought to be far apart on valuations. They are likely to disclose early next month whether they are to proceed with formal merger negotiations.

Mr Kroschke said that Deutsche Telekom and C&W "are involved in sensitive, pre-exploratory talks. But there have been no official discussions."

Telekom, which is to be privatised in November. "The English market is a dominant market in Europe through which a lot of [telecoms] traffic streams are routed. We are of the opinion that we want to be present in this region, alone or with partners."

Shares in C&W closed up 9p at 535p on the news that Deutsche Telekom was a potential bidder after touching a high of 546p. BT's shares gained 1 1/2p to 371 1/2p.

Before Mr Kroschke's comments, the speculation was that Deutsche Telekom was interested only in Mercury Communications, which BT would have to sell if it merged with C&W to avoid a monopolies inquiry. Deutsche Telekom is also pondering a bid for Videotron, the cable company put up for auction by its Canadian parent. Videotron, with cable-telephony rights in the City and Westminster, would provide the German

company with an instant base on which to build a British telecoms service.

Analysts and financial advisers said a bid by Deutsche Telekom is possible but unlikely partly because the company is saddled with debts of almost DM100 billion. C&W has a market capitalisation of about £12 billion and the takeover premium could add billions to the price tag.

More importantly, it is highly unlikely that Deutsche Telekom would be able to merge with C&W through a reverse takeover. In such a deal, C&W would issue new shares to take over the much larger BT, instead of the other way around. BT proposed the reverse takeover to avoid the £6 billion-plus expense of having to buy out the minority shareholders of Hong Kong Telecom.

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Anglo American tightens grip on Lonrho

By Jon Ashworth

ANGLO American, the South African mining group, has tightened its grip on Lonrho, buying a way into a £1.2 billion pan-African mining portfolio that includes Ashanti Goldfields.

Anglo American has taken an option over 18.4 per cent of Lonrho shares, lifting effective control to 28.5 per cent. The move gives it first pick at a portfolio spanning gold, coal and platinum and blocks moves by rivals such as American Barrick, Gencor and RTZ-CRA.

Dieter Bock, Lonrho's chief executive, is intent on divesting the group's mining interests and concentrating on non-mining activities, including sugar and hotels. A proposed demerger is expected to be put to shareholders in the summer.

The opening shots were fired last month, when Anglo paid £91 million for the 5.9 per cent stake in Lonrho formerly held by Tiny Rowland. It has since lifted its stake to 7.5 per cent. The group controls a further 2.6 per cent through Southern Life, an associate company, and has now clinched the right to buy Mr Bock's 18.4 per cent stake.

The option is expected to be exercised simultaneously with the Lonrho demerger, providing cash for Mr Bock, and giving Anglo American an instant 28.5 per cent stake in a lucrative pan-African portfolio. Lonrho's interests embrace coal and platinum, and include a 37 per cent stake in Ashanti, the Ghanaian gold producer. Anglo American has been looking to expand its mining interests beyond the Zambesi.

Lonrho shares were steady at 207.5p.

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BUSINESS TODAY

FT-SE 100	3768.8	(+22.4)
Yield	3.54%	
FT-SE All share	1876.5	(+10.5)
Nikkei	21860.47	(-33.96)
New York	5598.02	(+20.95)
Dow Jones	636.45	(+4.11)
S&P Composite	636.45	(+4.11)
Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
Long Bond	6.84%	(6.84%)
Yield		
3-mth Interbank	6 1/8%	(6 1/8%)
100-day bill	105 1/2%	(104 1/2%)
1-year bill		
New York	1.5125	(1.5114)
London	1.5125	(1.5131)
DNI	2.2750	(2.2713)
DM	7.7280	(7.7180)
SF	1.8545	(1.8469)
Yen	164.25	(164.10)
S Index	96.8	(96.7)
Tokyo close	Yen 109.05	
Brent 15-day (Jun)	\$29.40	(\$29.95)
London close	\$394.45	(\$396.25)

Bid approval talk boosts power shares

By Sarah Cunningham

ELECTRICITY shares powered ahead yesterday, driven by reports that the Monopolies and Mergers Commission is to clear PowerGen's £1.9 billion bid for Midlands Electric and National Power's £2.8 billion bid for Southern Electric and by expectations of further takeover bids in the sector.

The Department of Trade and Industry confirmed that it had received the commission's report late last month. It would not say when Ian Lang, the President of the Board of Trade, would announce his decision on the bids, but expectations were growing that it would be soon.

The less than stringent conditions reportedly attached to the go-ahead for

the bids boosted share prices. The next important factor will be the prices at which the two generators relaunch their bids.

PowerGen shares closed at 562.5p, up 13.5p. National Power at 492p, up 14p, Midlands Electric at 405p, up 7p, and Southern Electric at 895p up 21p. Other power firms' shares also rose.

Piers Coombs, analyst with Barclays de Zoete Wedd, said: "We expect this will be the catalyst for another round of bids for the remaining regional companies - London, Yorkshire, East Midlands and Northern." American power firms are expected to be first in line as bidders.

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Second refinancing in a year for NP

By Sarah Bagnall

NEWSPAPER PUBLISHING (NP), the publisher of the Independent and the Independent on Sunday, yesterday announced its second refinancing in less than a year involving an equity for debt swap and the raising of £9 million of fresh funds.

The funds are being injected by Mirror Group Newspapers (MGN) and Independent Newspapers (IP), the Dublin publishing group controlled by Tony O'Reilly.

In total the companies, which are Newspaper Publishing's two largest shareholders, are injecting £23 million of equity into the loss-making publishing group. Of this, £14 million relates to the conversion into equity of loans made by Mirror Group and Independent Newspapers.

The balance of £9 million is new money, which will cover the group's forecast losses of £6 million for the current year.

The two companies have agreed to subscribe for a total of 85.7 million shares, at 31p a share, on the basis of one new share for every one already held.

As a result both MGN and IP will lift their holdings in NP from 43 per cent to 46.4 per cent.

Prisa, the Spanish publisher of El Pais, is not taking up its rights to new shares and as a result will see its holding slip from 12 per cent to 6.73 per cent.

The transaction follows a £20 million refinancing last summer. Mirror Group's shares closed 1p down yesterday at 229p.

Worried investors hunt the ostrich

By Robert Miller and Karen Zagor

HUNDREDS of concerned investors, many of whom have spent at least £14,000 for each ostrich acquired through the Ostrich Farming Corporation (OFC), have formed a fledgling action group to try to secure their investments.

The troubled OFC, which raised many millions of pounds from thousands of people, has been placed in provisional

liquidation by the High Court at the request of the Department of Trade and Industry. It is the subject of an investigation by the Serious Fraud Office.

Stephen Whitmore, a partner of Wilsons, a Salisbury law firm, said yesterday that he had received hundreds of inquiries relating to OFC from investors worldwide. He said that the most important was initially to establish the ownership of individual birds.

Eddy Nachtergaele, the Belgian farm-

er who looks after OFC's birds, yesterday told The Times that he had 3,000 birds on his two farms and at five other sites. A further 800-900 OFC ostriches were being shipped from Namibia. He said that the Official Receiver seemed satisfied after his visit to the farms.

Michael Pugh, the UK's Official Receiver, plans to write to individual investors soon.

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Confirmed: MMC's green light for Genco bids

It was several weeks ago, on Wednesday March 6 to be precise, that *The Times* exclusively predicted that the Monopolies and Mergers Commission was poised to give a qualified go-ahead for PowerGen's £1.9 billion takeover bid for Midlands Electricity and National Power's £2.8 billion bid for Southern. Silence reigned but, within a fortnight, the MMC requested a two-week extension of its deadline to April 4. This request, duly granted by Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, was interpreted in the City as an indication that the MMC required more time to draft stringent conditions to the proposed amalgams. In the event, the MMC's report was forwarded to the DTI on March 29.

More silence until last Thursday when speculation that the MMC will give a green light for the Gencos takeover ambitions raised Midlands' share prices to 398p.

It is customary for the President of the Board of Trade to divulge the findings of an MMC inquiry but yesterday, courtesy of *The Econo-*

mist, heralded a break with tradition. *The Economist* let it be known that it had "obtained" a copy of the MMC's report and confirmed that the five-strong panel, spearheaded by Graeme Odgers, the MMC's chairman, recommends the takeovers by a majority of four to one.

According to *The Economist*, the conditions attached to the go-ahead are:

- The disposal of Midlands and Southern of their respective generating capacity within 18 months.
- The requirement of undertakings from the Gencos to ring fence price-sensitive information regarding contracts signed by the Recs with other generators.
- Licences of the merged companies to be amended to give Ofwat, the industry regulator, additional powers to monitor and enforce operating agreements.

The dissenting voice would appear to be that of Patricia Hodgson, the BBC's director of policy and planning. The theme of Ms Hodgson's minority report is reputed to be that the mergers will limit

competition, increase prices and discourage new entrants into the market. Other members of the panel, including Stanley Metcalfe, Professor of Economics at Manchester University, David Jenkins, general secretary of the Welsh TUC and Roger Davies, a director of Airtours, take the view that although the mergers "may be expected to operate against the public interest" in some respects, these are not "sufficiently serious to justify prohibition".

The majority view is that if PowerGen and National Power dispose of six gigawatts of generating plant capacity — as demanded by Stephen Littlechild, Director-General of Ofwat — and new firms enter the industrial market as expected, there will be "a broadly satisfactory competitive environment from 1997".

As *The Times* emphasised last month, the MMC's recommendations represent yet another snub for Professor Littlechild, who is passionately opposed to vertical integration between the Gencos and the



MELVYN MARCKUS

Recs. Littlechild has consistently argued that the proposed mergers would increase the market share of PowerGen and National Power and would have a damaging effect on competition — a perspective echoed by Ms Hodgson. Despite Littlechild's views, the Government has already permitted vertical integration within the industry by way of last year's go-ahead for Scottish Power's £1.1 billion takeover bid for

Manweb. When Mr Lang referred the PowerGen/National Power bids last November he declared: "In general, I do not believe that vertical integration is inherently objectionable, whether in the electricity industry or elsewhere. However, in these two cases, the structural change proposed could have an effect on the development of competition."

As shares in the electricity sector blazed, John Battle, Shadow Energy Minister, said the sort of things that Shadow Ministers say. In his words: "This is a very serious leak of a draft document that throws into question the integrity of the relationship between the Secretary of State and the Monopolies and Mergers Commission." He added: "The contents are so market price sensitive that energy companies' shares are changing hands before the Secretary of State makes a decision on the findings of the report."

No arguing with Mr Battle on this count. On calculations, close on 55 million shares in the electricity sector changed hands yesterday as

the astute took positions in anticipation of a further round of consolidation within the sector.

It is no secret that several US utility companies, including the likes of Texas Utilities and Pacific Gas and Electric, are currently waiting on Mr Lang's statement on the MMC's findings before deciding whether to launch further forays into the UK electricity sector. Six Recs were acquired in last year's multi-billion pound takeover spree and speculation has recently focused on Yorkshire Electricity, 15p higher yesterday at 898p, and London Electricity, 10p up at 809p.

Support mounted for the two Recs under the spotlight, namely Southern, 21p higher at a record 895p, and Midlands, 7p to the good at 405p. Subject to a clearance from Mr Lang, the two Gencos will inevitably return to the fray but potential rivals have made the most of the delay brought about by the referrals and the possibility of a counter bid for Midlands should not be ruled out.

Similarly, the belief is mounting

in the City that the UK's two principal generating companies may not prove bid proof. PowerGen, 13p higher at 562p yesterday, is capitalised at some £4 billion, while National Power, 14p up at 492p, commands a market value of almost £5.6 billion. Several City analysts take the view that a Transatlantic bid for one of the Gencos may yet materialise.

Not a good week for Littlechild. The National Audit Office has inquired into the City's reaction to the Professor's review of his distribution review and gives warning that fund managers may have been "turned off" the forthcoming Railtrack and British Energy privatisations.

Vertical separation of the Gencos and the Recs was Littlechild's gold standard for the electricity industry. The MMC cruelly points out that a merged Genco and Rec "would be a more effective international competitor, partly through increased size and partly because it would possess a wider range of skills and experience".

Abbot on dividend list

ABBOT Holdings, the reshaped oilfield services company, formerly known as Unigroup, reported pre-tax profits of £3.88 million (1994: £364,000) for the 15 months to December 31. The results include a 6½-month contribution from KCA Drilling, its main subsidiary. Earnings were 3.2p a share (0.7p). There is a final dividend of 1.12p and a special dividend of 0.56p. There was no dividend in the previous year.

Redland offer

Redland, the building materials group, has increased its hostile takeover bid for Ennemiex, the aggregates company, by nearly £1 million to about £6.7 million and declared the offer final. Ennemiex investors are offered 35p a share, 3p higher than Redland's original bid. The shares rose 3p to 36p.

Fujitsu grows

Fujitsu, the Japanese electronics company, is creating 100 new jobs at its factory in West Belfast.

Briton chosen to head Ford's rescue of ailing Mazda

FROM ROBERT WYMAN IN TOKYO

FORD has stepped in to rescue Mazda, the ailing Japanese car manufacturer, and installed a British businessman to oversee the recovery.

Henry Wallace is expected to take over as president in late June, when he will become the first foreigner to head a major Japanese company since the Second World War.

Mr Wallace, 50, will succeed Yoshihiro Wada with the immediate task of restoring the company to profit after three successive years of losses. Mazda reported net losses in 1993 and 1994 and is not expected to show a profit when results for the most recent fiscal year are announced.

Ford is to spend £326 million to increase its shareholding in Mazda from 25 per cent to 33.4 per cent, and will have a greater say in the day-to-day management.

Industry analysts said that a

closer relationship will serve as a shot in the arm for the financially weak Japanese carmaker. In spite of a recent revival in Japan's domestic market, Mazda sales have declined while the strong yen has eroded its exports.

The expanded tie-up will enable the two companies to co-ordinate product development, manufacturing and vehicle distribution, and to improve competitiveness through greater economies of scale.

For the struggling Japanese carmaker, Ford's resources will be of major importance in expanding its research and development programme. Meanwhile, Ford is seeking to expand its share of the Asian market and is particularly anxious to penetrate the Chinese market where it lags behind General Motors.

Some analysts believe Mazda's competitors have reason

to fear the enhanced partnership. If Mazda's technology is combined with Ford's design capacity this will improve Mazda's chances of seizing a bigger share of Japan's saturated domestic market, which will intensify competition.

Mr Wallace joined Ford of Europe in England in 1971. He moved to America in 1983, from where he was promoted to controller at Ford of Mexico in 1986. He returned to Britain in 1989, becoming treasurer of European operations before being made president of Ford's Venezuela company in 1992. Mr Wallace, who studied economics at Leicester University, was confirmed as executive vice-president of Mazda in June 1994.

Ford has been working closely with Mazda since the 1960s, forging a stronger relationship after becoming a substantial shareholder in 1979.



Henry Wallace, who becomes Mazda's president in June

Pensioners swell public coffers

BY KAREN ZAGOR

NATIONAL SAVINGS contributed a record £5.25 billion to government funding in the financial year just ended.

The strong performance was attributed largely to a decision announced in the last Budget by Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, to reduce the age limit to 60 on Pensioners Bonds and to lift the maximum holdings to £50,000. They made a net contribution of £2.3 billion. Premium bonds brought in a net £1.5 billion in the year.

In March, National Savings had gross sales of £1.59 billion.

Pensioners Bonds remained popular in the month, with net contributions of £578 million, followed by Premium Bonds at £203 million and Fixed-Interest Savings Certificates at £143 million.

Investors with Income Bonds now qualify for Pensioners Bonds and are allowed to transfer their investments. March was the first month this was allowed and about £90 million came from such reinvestments. Pensioners Bonds pay a fixed, guaranteed annual return of 7 per cent over five years.

UBS faces stormy time

BY PATRICIA TEHAN, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

FIREWORKS are expected at next week's meeting of stockholders of Union Bank of Switzerland, the country's biggest bank, after it rejected the offer of merger talks with CS Holding, a rival.

CS Holding, parent of the Credit Suisse bank, said this week that it felt the matter was one for shareholders, not management, to decide.

There was widespread speculation yesterday that CS Holding would not only raise

the matter at the meeting on Tuesday, but back rebel shareholders in a vote against a motion to elect Robert Studer as the next chairman of UBS.

Peter Thorne, banking analyst at Paribas, said: "I do not think UBS can climb away as easily as all that."

John Leonard, banking analyst at Salomon Brothers, said the rejection meant "people will be casting an eye over CS Holding given its weak recent performance".

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	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	1.01	1.05
Austria S	13.98	15.49
Belgium F	49.84	48.54
Canada C	2.156	1.996
Cyprus C	0.749	0.991
Denmark K	9.38	8.58
Finland Mk	7.06	7.01
France F	8.12	7.47
Germany D	2.43	2.22
Greece G	388.00	381.00
Hong Kong S	12.23	11.59
Ireland P	1.02	0.94
Israel Sh	5.1600	4.5100
Italy Lit	2400.00	2255.00
Japan Yen	173.40	162.40
Malta M	0.591	0.536
Netherlands G	2.620	2.450
New Zealand \$	2.38	2.16
Norway K	10.41	8.81
Portugal Esc	244.80	226.00
S Africa R	6.73	5.93
Spain Pta	167.00	184.00
Sweden Kr	10.74	9.94
Switzerland F	1.98	1.80
Turkey Lira	114257	106257
USA \$	1.206	1.476

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Employee 'cake' grows

THE average British employee is getting a bigger slice of the company's annual turnover, according to an analysis of 289,000 company accounts by Dun & Bradstreet, the business information company. During the past three years of audited accounts, employees' remuneration has increased from 25.4 per cent of annual turnover to 28.7 per cent. Other key ratios identified by Dun & Bradstreet as signs of recovery include a rise in average dividends to shareholders from 4 per cent of annual turnover to 4.5 per cent. Return on capital by companies has increased from 31.3 per cent to 37.8 per cent.

Price wrangle hits deal

GEC ALSTHOM, the Anglo-French engineering company, has abandoned plans to sell 28 locomotives to China because of disagreements over price. Bernard Pons, France's Transport Minister, said: "The Chinese said they were too expensive. They are going to buy elsewhere." The announcement was made on the third day of a trade visit by Li Peng, the Chinese Prime Minister. The largest deals concluded were for oil and gas, with Elf, the French petroleum group, sealing a deal worth \$130 million to supply oil and Sotregaz securing a \$50 million contract to supply gas to Shanghai.

US data mixed

THERE was mixed news on the American economy yesterday with a faster than expected rise in consumer prices but a weaker than anticipated reading for retail sales. US consumer prices increased by 0.4 per cent to March after rising 0.2 per cent in February, the Labour Department said. The closely watched core rate, which strips out volatile food and energy costs, rose 0.3 per cent in March after rising 0.2 per cent in February. Separate figures from the Commerce Department showed that retail sales rose only 0.1 per cent in March compared with 1.9 per cent in February.

Clark profits step up

SHAREHOLDERS in C&J Clark, the family-owned Somerset shoemaker, will be unable to sell out for at least another three years, in spite of hopes of an earlier stock market flotation. Clark, Britain's second-largest private company after Littlewoods, has seen off two attempts to force a flotation but is committed to float by May 1998. Pre-tax profits rose 26 per cent to £24.8 million in the year to January 31, fuelled by profits on property and pension holidays, and footwear earnings remain "quite unsatisfactory". A second interim dividend of 3.9p a share makes a total of 7p (6.5p) a share for the year.

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A WORKING WEEK FOR: MARK MASSARELLA

'Godfather' relishes family taste for catering

Jon Ashworth meets the MD of an Italian ice-cream dynasty with a belief in horses for courses

Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday

IT WAS a bad week for Mark Massarella. He had put German sausage on the menu in department

stores across the UK, just as the nation commemorated the anniversary of the first doodlebugs landing on London. An earlier German promotion was launched on the day the Bundesbank failed to support Britain in the exchange-rate mechanism. His timing left a lot to be desired.

Mark's father, Ronnie, made a similar gaffe in his role as manager of the British showjumping team. He declared on television that he would sooner pick men over women riders because they withstood the pressure better. What's more, you could have a drink with them and give them a "good bollocking". How to endear yourself to half the nation...

Horses and meals just about sum up the Massarellas, who began selling ice-cream to northerners, and proceeded to build one of the UK's biggest private catering

groups. Buy an ice-cream in Hamleys, on Regent Street, and you will have the Massarellas to thank for it. Most of the House of Fraser in-store cafes and restaurants fall under their control. Mark, 44, is managing director of Massarella Catering Group, which employs 1,800 people, and made a pre-tax profit of £2.1 million on turnover of £35 million last year.

The foundations were laid in 1860 when Mark's grandfather, Giovanni, set out from Italy with his family bound for a new life in America. "Rumour has it that they were on their way to the States, stopped off in South Yorkshire to visit friends, and really fell in love with the place," says Mark, sounding every bit the Yorkshireman.

Giovanni set about building an ice-cream business using an old handcart. By the 1920s his 12 sons were hard at work selling the goods. "The confectionery industry was very prevalent around the Doncaster area," says Mark. "My

father's early years were spent waiting outside the pits at 11 or 12 o'clock at night for [the] shift to come out, where they'd buy ice-cream. The stories go that the horses really knew their own way home because my father or his brothers were often fast asleep in the bottom of the cart."

In the 1950s, the family sold what was possibly the most advanced ice-cream manufacturing plant in the UK, if not in Europe, to J Lyons, later Lyons Maid. Ronnie Massarella bought back part of the business in 1963, and made it a market leader in soft ice-cream retailing.

In 1968, Ronnie was given the task of taking his cousin's horse, Mr Softie, to the Olympic Games in Mexico City. He was asked to step in after the team manager fell ill and was duly made Chef d'Equipe, a position he holds to this day.

The British showjumping team included Lady Fraser, wife of Sir Hugh, who had taken charge at House of Fraser on the death of his father.

Massarella restaurants soon began appearing in House of Fraser stores in Blackpool and Newcastle upon Tyne. The company subsequently

won the contract to supply ice-cream to Selfridge's in London, and held it for 16 years.

Mark runs the company with his three brothers, and does not have a regular routine. One day might find him visiting a new House of Fraser site in Swindon. The next might find him travelling round the M25 for discussions with clients. "I don't have such a thing as an average week. Some days I'm out very early in the morning and out until nine and ten at night. Other days I'll wander into the office at nine o'clock like anybody else. I try to not work on a Sunday now."

Mark left school at 16, and joined an ice-cream retailing depot in Doncaster, working his way up to depot manager. He was involved from the outset when the family began to diversify, opening the family's first in-store restaurant at Atkinsons in Sheffield.

Traditional British favourites such as baked beans on toast might be on the



Mark Massarella, one of four brothers in the family firm with a good working relationship and who "see themselves very much as equals with our own strengths"

way out. "I think tastes in food have changed tremendously in the last seven or eight years. People are travelling more, and have developed a very cosmopolitan taste. We are selling a range of Italian breads where people previously wanted a wrapped sandwich. I think coffee proves it more than anything. Flavoured coffees and the cappuccinos are all back in vogue."

Mark regularly travels abroad to catch up on the latest trends, and would like to see more theatre in his venues, with glass-fronted kitchens, and chefs whipping up stir-fries in full view of the diners. He thinks London has a lot to learn from New York. "There are so many good restaurants, even those in Saks Fifth Avenue and Barney's on Madison. They're superb and very entertaining, and they seem to have a lot more theatre about them."

American-style flair is creep-

ing into Massarella venues. "I was in a restaurant on Fifth Avenue where you could dip different types of bread into different oils, and buy both. We have jars filled with Italian mushrooms and olives and artichokes, and the customer actually sees us larding them out onto salads. We've seen a demand for them. If people can take home what they eat, it's a good add-on."

The Massarella empire is run from Thurcroft Hall near Sheffield, home to Ronnie, 72, and his wife, Edna, and set in 200 acres. There is a riding school in the grounds, and board meetings are punctuated by neighing from 20 horses.

Mark lives in the Old Laundry with his wife and five sons and is hailed in the family's publicity material as the Godfather, the one who listens to the ideas and seeks out the clients. Jeremy is portrayed as "the Consigliere, the money

man who the others believe is not really Italian in origin, but from another nationality more renowned for keeping a tight hold on the purse strings". A third brother, Stephen, is "the Arthur Dely, the wheeler and dealer. None of the others really know what he does out of business hours."

Michael, the quiet one, serves as the inspiration

for many of the menus. "Out of work he sees himself as a typical Italian peasant, growing veggie and pottering around his farm." Mark plays down the Godfather angle. "Obviously, I work very closely with my brothers and we have a very good family working relationship. We see ourselves very much as equals

with our own strengths." This said, Papa and the boys have a habit of turning up en masse at Dickins & Jones or the Army & Navy. "We try to make two visits a year as a board of directors and family together, to every restaurant. That's become a custom now."

Mark visits up to 20 stores some weeks. Nearly 1,000 food lines are distributed around the UK, and communication can be tricky at times. Mark recalls the store manager who dispatched an employee to a local supermarket to buy fresh supplies of chips. "She came back with a freshly wrapped bag of chips in newspaper from the local fish and chip shop. It just shows you how communication can go wrong."

Mark hopes to win more contracts running staff canteens - never, traditionally, the most gourmet of experiences. "We've only scratched

at the surface with our business in that sector. Most clients, now, are wanting a lot more for their staff with perhaps less subsidy attached to it. I think people will pay a little bit more if they know they're getting some variety and something better."

Massarella is locked in a battle for market share with the giants of UK catering, Compass, Sutcliffe and Gardner Merchant, but insists no one in the family is ready to cash in their chips, however generous the offer. "We've had a few tempting discussions, but none of us is at the stage where we want to sell out." About £2 million of profit was ploughed back into the business last year, after payment of directors' fees, which Mark insists are reasonable. "There's certainly no fat cats on our board at the moment."

The aim is to lift pre-tax profits from £2.1 million to

£3.5 million by 2000, on turnover rising from £35 million to £55 million. "That's very realistic, and we're already in negotiations with independent shopping centres. Staff catering is becoming more retail. We feel we are well placed."

Family-run companies are prone to feuds, as followers of C&W Clark and Unilevers are well aware. Mark insists that all is well at Massarella. "I think I've been very fortunate with my brothers that we've worked very well together and we've kept the business as a whole. I think what tends to happen with a lot of family businesses is that you get to a certain size and get married, and split up the business. We've actually managed to maintain a growing business where we work very well together and trade off each other's strengths. What the next generation's going to be like, God only knows."

HIDDEN ASSETS

Telecoms giant enjoys art of water

Art on a big scale provides a relaxing feature at the headquarters of Cable and Wireless. Joanna Pitman reports

IF the tense negotiations between Cable & Wireless and British Telecom, aimed at forging a £32 billion merger, get bogged down in complexities, you can imagine that Brian Smith, chairman of Cable & Wireless, might seek calming inspiration from the six-storey waterfall that flows peacefully, from morning to night, in the atrium of his company's head office.

The waterfall, technically a water sculpture, is the work of William Pye, the artist who designed the monumental 70-yard water wall for Nicholas Grimshaw's British Pavilion at Expo '92 in Seville.

While the water wall was a highlight of the Expo, Pye later caught the public eye in Britain with his water sculpture at Gatwick Airport.

The work, *Slipstream and Jetstream*, is in the departure lounge of the North Terminal and consists of two large asymmetrical cones covered by a thin lamina film of flowing water that is dragged into rhythmic wave patterns.

Hundreds of people pass it every day as they descend a circular walking ramp that curls around it on the way to the departure gates.

C&W's investment in Pye was a shrewd and early one. In 1989, when plans for refurbishing C&W's 1956 building at 124 Theobalds Road, London, were being discussed, Gordon Owen, then managing director, suggested a water feature, and Pye was found. The piece he

produced for C&W, with his architect, David Franklin, is simply entrancing. It is called *Aventino*, after one of the hills of Rome that was home to Mercury.

It consists of a continuous "wall" of water flowing six storeys down platinated bronze panels that are sculpted to create a rippled effect. At the bottom, the water wall fans out to flow down a wide glass sheet and into a shallow pond in the foyer.

The sculpture is lit with powerful theatrical lights to pick out the different colours in the bronze backdrop and to highlight the shapes created by the moving flow.

Light shades of green and the cool Portland stone facades all around create a graceful, tranquil ambience in the humming headquarters of one of the world's biggest telecommunications groups. When you use the glass-fronted lifts, you pass behind the flow of water and can look down on a furious cascade. It is a sensation similar to walking behind the torrential flow of Niagara Falls.

Since the C&W work, Pye has been involved in many big engineering and construction projects, including theme consultant to Teesside Development Corporation.

It is no surprise that his creativity has followed this direction. His father was Sir David Pye, a president of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, who helped to found the engineering school at Cambridge.



Cable and Wireless's six-storey atrium waterfall

After graduating from the Royal College of Art, Pye joined a West End gallery, where he had several successful exhibitions. However, the larger scales of industrial materials and processes soon began to interest him and a fascination with big outdoor works lured him away from

the intimacy of the gallery world. He was worked with various degrees of success as a sculptor in a number of media for 25 years until the 1980s, when he became fascinated by the idea of working with water. "Water sculpture" at the time had barely progressed beyond the foun-

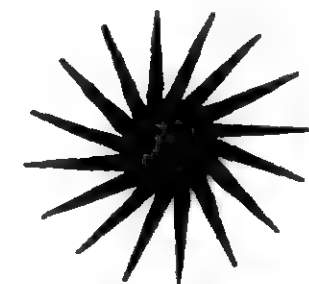
tain, and Pye began his water work in the US, producing sculptures in or around pools, and five pieces for shopping malls.

Pye's first real "water sculpture" is *Water Trellis*, a triangle of steel tubes from which water shoots in a serene, curved stream. After that, he began a series of sculptures that consist of bowls brimming with water. The mesmerising focus of each piece is the way in which the meniscus stands above the rim of the bowls. The surfaces are so smooth, dark and opaque that they look like polished black marble.

Each piece requires a high level of lead detection and closely monitored water treatment. In one early work, Pye ended up with gallons and gallons of bright red, rusty water because an engineer had failed to use stainless steel piping. After that, Pye decided to oversee construction himself.

The C&W installation includes a sophisticated leak detection system that will trigger a shut-off of the water supply and make the pumps drain the system. Filters and a water treatment plant have been custom-made and are designed to pump nearly nine gallons a second around the sculpture.

In many ways, Pye is an architect-sculptor, a rare combination, and he is now rising high in Britain's firmament of artistic stars. *Aventino* has been short-listed, with six other pieces, for the 1995 Art and Work Award, and members of the Fountains Society make pilgrimages to Theobalds Road to view C&W's flowing art.



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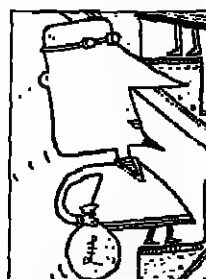
UNIT-LINK LOSS 30

Those who miss out in the Clerical Medical takeover

WEEKEND MONEY

BUMPY RIDE 35

Ups and downs of owning an escalator bond



Ombudsman responds to payout row

Sara McConnell says the outrage felt by dispossessed savers may lead to a law change

Brian Murphy, the Building Societies Ombudsman, is to press for an extension of his powers to allow him to investigate complaints from hundreds of thousands of savers and borrowers who have been excluded from bonus payouts from society mergers and conversions.

The move by the independent official, who intervenes in disputes between societies and their savers and borrowers, comes in the week that the National & Provincial's 1.4 million members voted overwhelmingly for their society to be taken over by the Abbey National in return for payouts of up to £4,750. But the vote only went through after his board suffered hours of attacks by members who will lose out.

Such is the anger felt by those who did not qualify for payouts from the Woolwich that they have formed a protest group, headed by David Adams, a Woolwich saver for 26 years. Mr Adams, who believes the most effective action is for long-term members to join together, has invited all disgruntled savers and borrowers to meet at the Most House in Oxford on May 11 where an action plan will be drawn up.

Meanwhile, angry members excluded from bonus payouts from N&P and other societies are besieging the

ombudsman's office, demanding that he intervene to force societies to reverse their decision. The Times has received many similar letters. But the ombudsman cannot investigate such complaints as they are outside his remit.

Many savers and borrowers

have already missed out on payouts after the takeover of the Cheltenham & Gloucester by Lloyds. Many more will be excluded from bonanzas after the conversions of the Halifax and the Woolwich to public companies and the takeover of National & Provincial by the Abbey National. The Alliance & Leicester has yet to announce details of bonuses for members who agree to it becoming a bank.

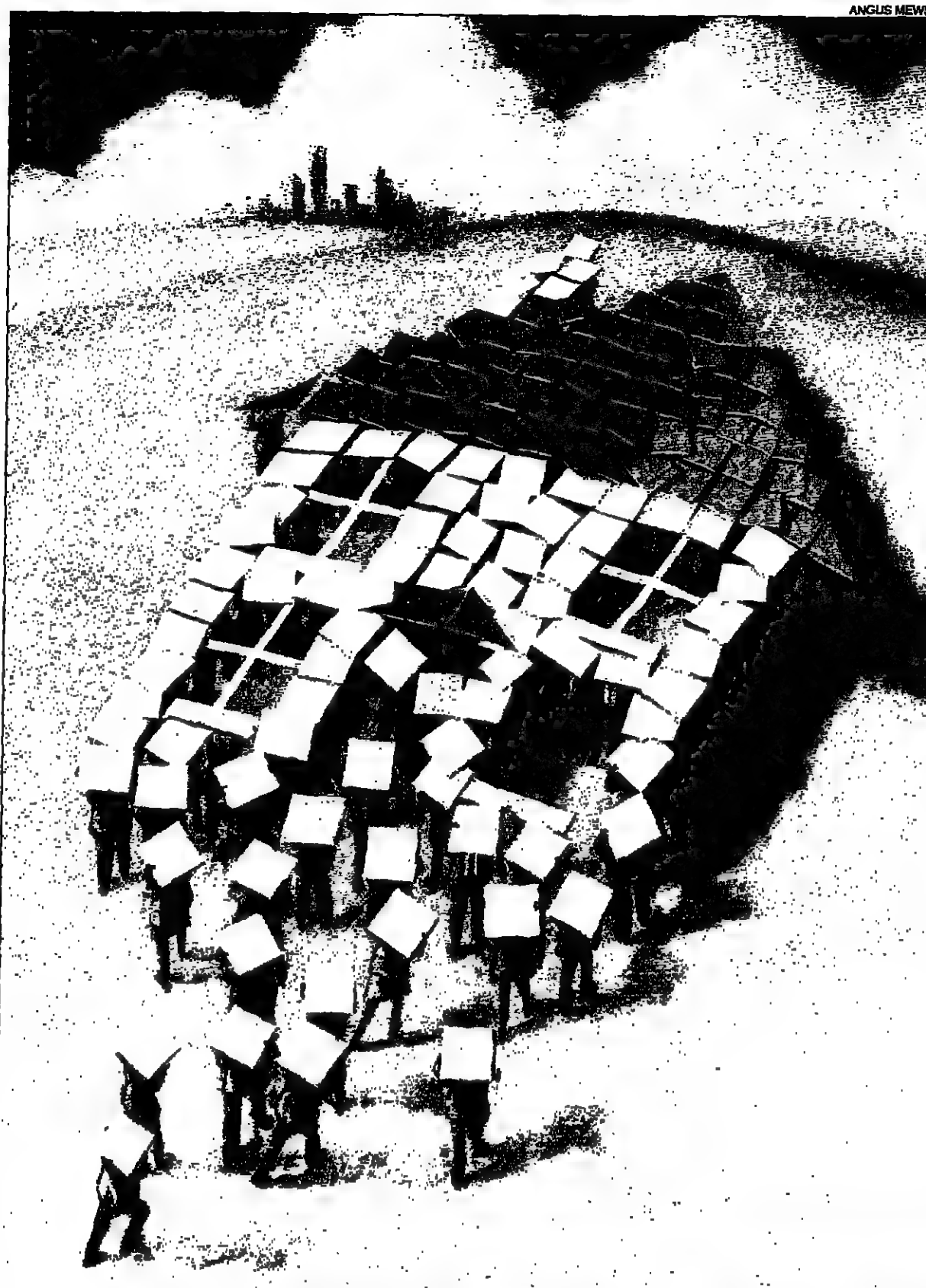
Building societies blame poorly drafted legislation governing takeovers and conversions for many exclusions. But societies themselves have come under attack for setting arbitrary cut-off dates, disqualifying loyal members. To thwart opportunists who were opening accounts in the first weeks of January, the Woolwich fixed on December 31, 1995. But this worked against many long-term investors who had taken their balance below the £100 limit on that date.

As the takeover speculation grows again this week, Mr Murphy is concerned that excluded members have no redress, apart from the courts. The Building Societies Commission will hear formal representations from members when it is deciding whether or not to approve takeovers or conversions but will only investigate whether correct procedures have been followed.

N&P answers, page 30

THE RULES

- You can only qualify for a cash payout if you have been a qualifying member for at least two years. This means either that you have had £100 or more in a share account at the date set by the building society or that you owe £100 or more on a mortgage.
- If you have been a qualifying member for less than two years you can only receive a bonus as shares.
- Only the first named person on the account counts as a member. After an outcry, a Private Member's Bill brought by Douglas French, MP, changed the rules to allow widows and widowers to receive payouts if the first named holder died before a payout.
- Deposit accounts have no membership rights.



Full steam ahead from Monday

The pathfinder prospectus for the £1.8 billion Railtrack privatisation will be launched on Monday, amid a flurry of train smiles, such as "gathering a head of steam" and "about to leave the station," Anne Ashworth writes.

The draft document will not contain the price for shares in the company, which owns the rail network's track, termini and tunnels. But these blanks will be filled in on May 1 when the final version of the prospectus is expected.

Meanwhile, the stock market already predicts that Railtrack's shares, in their partly-paid discounted form, will offer a yield of about 15-20 per cent. The yield on the fully-paid shares should be about 6 per cent, comparable to the return on the National Grid.

The price will reflect the political uncertainties surrounding Railtrack. Labour has already announced that, if it takes power, it will toughen the regulatory regime governing the business. However, it will not seek to renationalise the business. An outline of the party's proposals will appear in the prospectus. It will also contain details of the departure of Roger Salmon, the rail franchise director, the official responsible for selling off British Rail's passenger services. The surprise news late this week of his decision to quit has cast something of a shadow over the flotation.

Payment for Railtrack shares will be in two instalments, each in a different tax year. Individual investors will get a discount on their first instalment. Under the terms of the incentive package, announced on Thursday, they will also be able to receive a 15p discount on the second instalment on the first 800 shares allocated. This sweetener is worth a maximum of £120. Investors can also opt for one free bonus share for every 15 held continuously until May 31 1999. These incentives apply only through share shops.

Weekend Money is edited by Anne Ashworth

Mutual — well, for the moment

As the Bristol & West Building Society prepares to turn its back on nearly 150 years of mutual tradition by passing into the control of the Bank of Ireland, speculation surrounding the sector is running at a high pitch.

After the news that both the Bristol & West and the Northern Rock, as predicted by The Times, are abandoning mutualism, the focus is increasingly turning to the medium-sized societies, such as Birmingham Midshires, West Bromwich, Chelsea, National Counties, Norwich & Peterborough and Portman. The societies are seen as possible hostile bid targets, or as candidates for friendly mergers.

All have this week protested that they intend to remain independent. But such words now sound hollow since they

were also spoken by every society that has announced its intention to turn itself into a bank, or become a bank subsidiary. This quote from the Birmingham Midshires is typical: "We are committed to our mutual values, we have had no approaches and there have been no talks."

The Portman, however, is being more realistic. The society is ranked 12th but, in the new order, after the various conversions and takeovers, it will be nearer sixth place and interested in merging with a medium-sized building society in the South of England.

"We are interested in looking at mergers, where they make geographical sense and as long as the Portman was the dominant partner," said John Gully, the society's head of corporate affairs. "The problem is that as soon as an

interest in a merger is announced, you are considered 'in play' and that's when a bank could make a hostile bid." Other societies are running scared from the torrent of funds now flowing through their doors and some are rejecting new customers. The National Counties, 32nd in the league, and the Lambeth, ranked at number 30, this week announced that they are no longer opening share accounts.

The Nationwide, the second largest society, this week showed its commitment to mutualism by cutting its mortgage rate to 6.74 per cent, 0.51 per cent below the Halifax. But this action will not ensure that it escapes the speculation, as it is seen as a possible aggressor, eager to acquire other societies. Although today the phrase "mutual and proud

of it" is never far from the lips of any Nationwide executive, the society has, in the recent past, contemplated a stock market flotation. These plans were scotched when it lost out to Abbey National in the struggle for control of the National & Provincial. The Nationwide has also been seen as a possible target for the Midland Bank which would be eager to enlarge its mortgage operations.

This week the society stated its position thus: "We are not actively looking for merger opportunities but if another society shared our values, we would be happy to talk to them. However, we would not want to get into a bidding auction with a plc."

SARAH JONES AND ANNE ASHWORTH

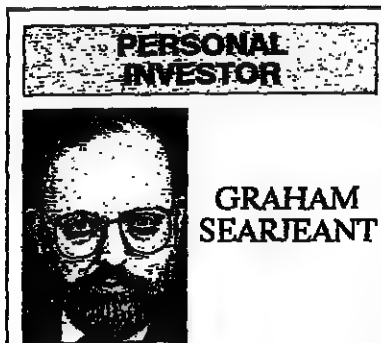
Murphy in Downing Street

Merrill Lynch's latest City survey found that 93 per cent of the fund managers polled expected Labour to form the next government. Individuals are not so nearly unanimous. Loyal Tories hate to think their party will lose. But after the voters' verdict it is assumed that the sensible strategy is to assume Tony Blair will be at Number 10 by May next year and Gordon Brown next door.

This need not make investors pore over Labour policy papers in search of winners and losers. There will be plenty of that, but it will be a frustrating task. To start with, Labour has made a virtue of avoiding controversy, or the commitment that traditionally boosted public sector construction and investment. Intentions are also a poor guide to what actually happens. In 1979-80, the last time the new Conservative government wanted to sweep away swathes of manufacturing industry. Yet that was the result of its actions.

In one respect, events are likely to repeat what happened 17 years ago, the last time the political tide reversed. Now, as then, the incumbent government is likely to take short-term measures to boost its chances. In 1979, Labour's Clegg commission on public sector pay delivered an unwelcome boost to public spending and inflation for the incoming Conservatives.

The present Cabinet seems addicted to unpopular measures, but the Chancellor will certainly cut direct taxes and will likely avoid any interest rate rise in the next 12 months, almost regardless of circumstance. A new Labour govern-



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

ment, like the Tories in 1979, would be too wrapped up in its own agenda for ministers to have their eye fully on the economic ball. In 1979, for instance, a long-planned switch from direct to indirect taxation worsened a legacy of rising nominal inflation, worsening the recession to come.

In 1997, good intentions may again be swamped by an unwelcome legacy. In this case, the heirlooms are likely to include an excessive Budget deficit and could stretch to an overly lax monetary stance. Correcting these would probably not be top priority in the early months, perhaps until the strain hits sterling. Labour will also have a steep learning curve and is likely to make early mistakes it will have to correct later.

Under a Blair government, the supposed law that Labour spends more, taxes more and gets into fiscal trouble should be repealed. Murphy's law will still be in force. It is even possible that Labour will repeat a mistake of 1965,

when tax measures designed to curb dividends, and boost retained profits for investment, cut retentions instead. Labour has wooed the City. But some top departmental shadow ministers have little idea how markets work: for instance that higher investment and profit go together in regulated industries.

A cautious investment stance may therefore be wise. Many small investors have a lot of their equity funds in high-yield utilities. Given Labour's promised levy and possible anti-dividend measures, sentiment is likely to desert such domestic stocks in favour of multinationals as the election approaches. If you want to lighten holdings, do it early. The same applies to perceived losers from a minimum wage, such as pub and hotel groups, whatever the reality.

Strategists at brokers BZW are already looking ahead to the phase of the economic cycle when cash is king and it pays to invest in companies with strong cash flow rather than cyclical recovery or growth stocks. The private sector has moved into financial deficit after four years of repaying debt. As BZW admits, it is premature to invest defensively. You still want growth as well as strong internal finances. On the surface, that applies even more if politics unduly prolong short-term growth policies. But retrenchment would then be worse.

Strong cash generators in growth industries are also a good bet if Labour acts against dividends and takeovers. But investors should be more wary of political accident than Labour policies.

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Unit-linked clients miss takeover bonus

Marianne Curphey on winners and losers among Clerical Medical clients as the Halifax snaps up the life insurer

Within six weeks, Clerical Medical policyholders will discover how much they will gain from the £800 million takeover of the life insurer by the Halifax Building Society.

However, one category of policyholders will be excluded from the special bonus payout. They are the tens of thousands of savers with unit-linked policies who cannot even voice displeasure by voting against the deal, because they are not entitled to vote. They are barred by the arcane rules of mutual organisations such as Clerical Medical, which say that only with-profits policyholders have a stake in the business and the right to vote.

They will not receive payouts because they are deemed not to have taken a share of the risk — Clerical Medical has grown and they have not provided capital for its expansion.

Instead, their contributions have been pooled to buy units that are kept separate from the

main fund. Although they have been charged expenses to cover the cost of running the fund, their contributions, or so the argument runs, have not helped to bring in new business.

Douglas Claisse, deputy chief executive of Clerical Medical, said that only policyholders with unit-linked policies or ordinary with-profits funds would have voting rights and share in the payout.

He said: "The Halifax is taking over Clerical Medical, and the with-profits policyholders who are members of the mutual are being compensated for losing their membership rights. Unit-linked policyholders are not affected."

However, many unit-linked policyholders who have invested in the mutual feel that they are being short-changed.

Katie Knapton, a Times reader who works at Cambridge University and runs a society for Cambridge graduates, believes the distinction is unfair. "It has never been

explained to unit-linked policyholders in detail why they have been excluded from the payout, since many of them have made contributions for a number of years," she said.

Roman Cizdyn, an insurance analyst with Merrill Lynch, agrees. Unit-linked policyholders might, in theory, have a case for challenging their exclusion from the special bonuses if they were sold the product by a member of a direct sales force who could have advised them to opt for a with-profits policy, he says.

Mike Wadsworth, an actuary with Watson Wyatt, the accountancy firm, said that if unit-linked policyholders were to receive a share of the profits of the organisation, a buyer might decide to reward them when the deal goes through as a sweetener.

Industry figures show that unit-linked policies are sold in roughly equal numbers in the UK, although when financial markets are rising, unit-linked policies are popular because they take advantage of investment returns.

General Accident, which bought the life company Provi-

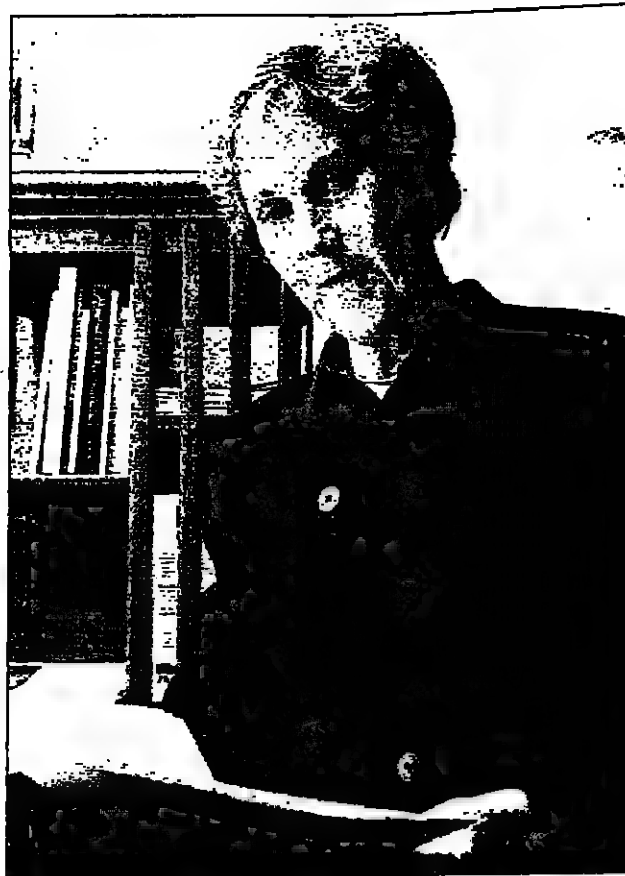
dent Mutual last year, will pay bonuses of about £100 to its 250,000 with-profits policyholders, but nothing to its 50,000 unit-linked members.

Mike Urnston, assistant general manager and chief actuary of General Accident, says that only with-profits policyholders are being rewarded because, historically, they have provided the capital to make the business grow.

"Unit-linked policyholders only benefit from a takeover if the management charges on their funds are reduced or frozen," he said. "We have guaranteed that expenses for Provident Mutual savers will not rise for five years. With-profits premiums go into the reserves, which the company can use to finance new business."

Clerical Medical has guaranteed that expenses, which are reviewed annually, will rise in line with the Retail Price Index and not above it for at least five years. At present, the average effect of charges on a fund's performance is equivalent to an annual 1 per cent yield cut.

For most with-profits policyholders, Clerical Medical will pay an enhanced terminal bonus (an extra payment distributed at the end of the policy's



Katie Knapton considers policy distinctions unfair

life) plus a one-off bonus (equivalent to the special annual bonus) every December for the next three years. The policy must have been in force at midnight on March 22 and still be running at midnight on December 31, 1996. Mr Claisse estimates this will be worth an average £2,172 to someone who has held a £30,000 policy for 15 years.

Savers whose with-profits

policies mature between the two qualifying dates will be given the equivalent of the special reversionary (annual) bonus only. A small number of policyholders who took out their unit-linked policies before 1984 — the year in which the group changed the rules on voting rights — will also benefit from a payout. All other unit-linked policyholders will be excluded.

N&P explains why some will lose out

The N&P takeover now has to be confirmed by the Building Societies Commission. The hearing takes place on June 3 and members who believe they have been unfairly excluded or are otherwise dissatisfied will be able to attend in person or write to put their case. Written representations must be received by May 13. If all goes according to plan, the takeover will take place on August 5 and payouts will follow in September.

Who gets what payout can seem complicated to members, but the deciding factor is how long you have been with the N&P.

Savers of less than two years' standing will receive £500 worth of free Abbey National shares. To qualify, they have to have had a share account with more than £100 invested on April 28, 1995 and December 31, 1995. Borrowers will also get £500 of Abbey shares if they had mortgages of more than £100 on April 28, 1995, and continue to do so until the takeover.

Savers who have been with N&P for more than two years will get a larger £750 which they can choose to take either in Abbey shares or in cash.

On top of this they will get a payout of at least 7 per cent of the balance in their account, up to a maximum of £3,500 on a balance of £50,000. Two year savers will have to have had a share account open with more than £100 in it on April 28, 1995 and December 31, 1995 and keep the account open until the takeover.

The first named holder of a joint account will get the payout. If he or she dies before the takeover, the second named should get the payout.

Similarly if the holder of an account in a sole name dies, his or her successor can qualify. However many longstanding N&P members are angry at being excluded from the bonus, while others who joined when the takeover was first rumoured this time last year stand to receive £500 of Abbey National shares.

N&P said its helpline was unable to answer individual questions posed by *Weekend Money* readers for legal reasons. So *The Times* approached N&P for answers to some of the letters it has received.

Nigel Samuelson, Powys "My wife stands to lose a substantial bonus because I transferred our joint account into her sole name last October, a few days before the terms of the transfer were announced. I did so when my wife was seriously ill to try to equalise our estates. The effect is manifestly unjust as our savings with the society derived primarily from the surplus equity in our home when we moved." In a letter to Lord Shuttleworth, N&P

chairman, Mr Samuelson elaborates: "Last October, a few days before the terms of the merger were announced, I transferred my share in a joint account with my wife... Consequently as I was the first named, it appears my wife has forfeited her entitlement to any variable distribution... To lose in excess of £2,500 is a loss we can ill afford. I would submit to you that the first named rule in the prospectus is also against the spirit of equal opportunity as it discriminates against women. In my own case, had my wife transferred her share in our account to me it would have had a nil effect as far as entitlement to any variable distribution."

N&P replies: "It is true Mrs Samuelson will forfeit her payout for the variable payout to members of more than two years' standing because she was not a member in her own right on the joint named account and has been a member in her own right on the sole named account for less than two years. Nor will she get the £500 fixed distribution either because she did not have an account open as a member on April 28 1995. 'We feel really bad about these people. But our branches were not able to comment [and advise the Samuelsons against moving accounts] for legal reasons. We did produce a leaflet advising people of the significance of joint named accounts but only after October 16 when we published the terms of the merger. The branches wouldn't have known any details before then.'"

Dr R. I. Watson, Sussex "I have been a customer of the N&P for some years, using it for depositing money against future tax liabilities. As luck would have it I went into my branch on December 27, 1995, and 'withdrew' by cheque a sum which reduced my balance below the magic £100 level. However, since this was the holiday period the cheque did not arrive in my bank until January 3, 1996, and the money was not actually cleared until January 8, 1996. It is my contention therefore that I fulfilled N&P's requirement."

N&P replies: "As soon as a cheque is drawn on a building society account, the withdrawal happens and the money is deducted from the account. Building society cheques are not like bank cheques and they can be treated like cash. There will always be people who lose out — this is in the nature of cut-off dates. The £100 minimum is specified in the Building Societies Act."

SARA MCCONNELL

Caroline Merrell on the Inland Revenue decision to change the treatment of educational trusts

Revenue gives parents a caning

Thousands of parents with children in private education will have to pay higher fees after a shock decision by the Inland Revenue to change the taxation treatment of educational trusts.

Many trusts are set up as charities which allows them to pay out school fees in a tax-efficient manner. Parents or grandparents can pay a lump sum in to a trust run by an insurance company or financial adviser. The trust will then buy annuities — investments which pay a regular income. At present, the income is tax-free. If the Inland Revenue proposals go through unopposed, this income will become taxable.

The Revenue aims to bring in the changes from April next year. Its decision follows a two year investigation by the Charity Commission into the charitable status of educational trusts. The commission felt that many of the trusts were set up merely to provide cheaper school fees rather than as charities. Many of the trusts made donations towards particular school facilities to maintain their charitable status.

Hugh Rogers, Charity Commission spokesman, said: "We are of the opinion that the trusts are not essentially charities."

He said the commission had withdrawn the charitable status of five trusts. The trusts are run by the School Fees Insurance Agency (SFIA), the Equitable Educational Trust, the Save & Prosper Educational



Good old daze: few worried about how to pay school fees when Robert Donat starred in the original *Good-Bye Mr Chips*

Trust, the Castle Educational Trust and the Sun Life Educational Trust.

Mr Rogers said: "Charities are not meant to benefit particular individuals. The charities can appeal against the decision in the High Court if they want to. We think that these organisations no longer qualify for this status. So we will simply remove them from our register. Our ruling comes at

the end of a long investigation."

Anne Feek, SFIA managing director, said she intended to appeal against both the Revenue and the Charity Commission's decision. She added that although the ruling does come into force next year, it amounts to retrospective legislation.

She said: "We are vigorously defending the case for existing clients. The plan has

been in operation since 1959. Many people will have invested on the basis that they will get the tax break." She estimated that the ruling could affect about 10,000 of her clients alone.

School fees specialists are unsure exactly what the effect of the ruling will be on the price of private education. But some estimate that it could mean increases of about 8 per

cent. The change could be particularly hard on those who have saved for a long time to provide their children or grandchildren with school fees, because the amount invested will be greater.

Geoffrey Harrison Dees, chairman of the Sun Life Educational Trust (Slet), has written to clients warning them of the change. In his letter he said: "Since 1952, Slet

has been recognised as a charity by the Inland Revenue. For over 30 years Slet has been entitled to claim a refund of the tax deducted from its investment income in relation to school fees plans. This has allowed the trust to pay an enhanced level of school fees to each of our planholders."

"However, the trust now faces the prospect of being without tax refunds in future in which case the trust will have to reduce all fee payments. This will not have any impact on fee payments made before April 1, 1997, but it will impact on payments made on or after that date."

He goes on to ask clients to write to their own Member of Parliament to try to have the ruling overturned.

Ms Feek said: "We do not think clients in educational trusts should take any drastic action. Despite the more disadvantageous tax position on the trusts, for those who only have five years to go before the child starts education, they can still be useful." She said other savings plans including Personal Equity Plans, and offshore bonds could be more appropriate.

The Independent Schools Information Service (Istis), which keeps statistics on the independent sector estimated that about 5 per cent of the 500,000 children in private education relied on educational trusts.

An Istis spokeswoman said that the shock would have an effect on the ability of parents to fund for the long term education of children.

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&P explains why some will lose out

Cautionary tale of nest-eggs

Like an Aesop's fable, the troubled story of the Ostrich Farming Corporation, now the subject of an official investigation, is a cautionary tale. It would appear to hold lessons for investors, and also for the watchdogs responsible for investor protection.

The precepts for investors are simple, obvious even. But it seems that they are easily forgotten, even by the most cautious people. Perhaps they believe that the strict rules governing the promotion of investments apply to every money-making scheme, including those based on ostriches which were, as OFC, boasted, "the cash crop of the Nineties."

To ensure that you and your cash are not parted for ever, always be suspicious of a company offering higher-



COMMENT
ANNE ASHWORTH
Personal Finance Editor

than-average returns, especially when the company involved is not an authorised investment business.

The Ostrich Farming Corporation promised returns of 50 per cent plus, a figure that the most talented fund manager can only dream of achieving. As it dealt in alternative investments, the company did not need a licence from one of investment regulators. This means that, whatever fate it holds in store for

OFC, the outcome of the investigation not being known, its hapless customers are not covered by any compensation scheme.

It could be argued that anyone putting the proceeds of a matured Tessa into such an untried venture, as likely to prove to be a turkey as a nest egg, deserves to lose their money. But this would excuse the lamentable failure of the authorities to alert the public to its concerns about OFC.

They should now be assessing their role to ensure that there is no repetition of the delays seen in this sorry episode. More than a year ago, the Department of Trade and Industry knew that OFC's operations were causing considerable disquiet. But they stood idly by, allowing the company to trade merrily on, attracting more than a million a month.

The very survival of the company instilled confidence in aspiring investors who mistakenly believe that the powers-that-be intervene as soon as searching questions are raised about an enterprise.

It is, of course, essential to you can about an investment before signing a cheque. However, the DTI

possessed information about OFC that the average individual could never have gleaned. There is, for example, the identity of one of its salesmen, Paul Prew-Smith, a resident of sunny Marbella. His previous business, the Southport-based Fisher Prew-Smith, now failed, dealt in home-income plans. The official Investors Compensation Scheme has paid out more than £13 million to 1,000 of his elderly victims.

As well as keeping investors in the dark, the DTI would not help The Times in its inquiries over OFC. Let us hope that when it concludes its investigation into OFC it will not be so disobliging. Or we will be able to conclude that, although ostriches may actually not bury their heads in the sand, is a habit among regulators.

Timeshares use cheap loan lure

Unwary foreign timeshare property buyers may find their deal looks less attractive when they return home. Some mortgage brokers are promising families that they can remortgage their homes to raise money to buy the timeshare and, at the same time, cut their monthly outgoings. The lure of a lower mortgage can help to clinch the deal. Yet some timeshare buyers are finding that the rates offered abroad are lower than the rates they have to pay at home.

Within the past few weeks, the Office of Fair Trading has launched an investigation into one of the companies now operating in this field, the Mortgage Advice Centre, based in Leicester.

The OFT has taken the unusual and serious step of issuing a notice saying that it is "minded to revoke" the MAC's credit licence. If the Office of Fair Trading puts a "minded to revoke" notice on a credit broker, the company has to submit a defence before an adjudicator. Investigations can take several months.

The OFT moved to take action after dozens of complaints to trading standards officers. Most grievances

centred on the mortgage quotes used by the centre, which were faxed over to holiday resorts, while the holidaymakers were being sold timeshare apartments in Majorca, Minorca and Tenerife. The experiences of Margaret and Michael Fisher from Swindon are typical of many of those dealing with the MAC.

The couple were in Minorca when they were subjected to several hours of hard sell by a timeshare salesman who said they could reduce their overall mortgage outgoings, and still buy a timeshare worth £9,000. The couple were attracted by the deal. They were paying about £320 a month for a £40,000 mortgage on their home, which is worth about £100,000. The Mortgage Advice Centre told the Fishers that they could reduce their costs to about £230 a month.

Mrs Fisher, a teacher, said: "The company asked for a deposit of £1,200, which we did not have there and then, so we agreed they would take £200 off our Visa card, and take further instalments when there was enough credit available." The timeshare company took a further two instalments totalling more than £1,000

from the credit card. The picture changed when the Fishers returned to Britain. They were visited by an MAC representative who provided them with a remortgage rate quote which was higher than the earlier quote provided at the resort.

When the Fishers asked for their deposit back, the timeshare company threat-

ened legal action. They did get £500 of their deposit back, but are in dispute over the rest.

Diana Hanks, of the Timeshare Council, said many who had complained to her faced losing deposits of thousands of pounds. Ian Smith, of the MAC, said he was going to fight the OFT investigation.

He said: "The complaints against the company are unjustified. The client details often do not check out when they get home, which means that higher costs could be incurred."

He said he now arranged with the timeshare companies he dealt with to acknowledge the faxed quote, after earlier requests from trading standards officers.

CAROLINE MERRELL



Remortgaging victims: Margaret and Michael Fisher



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Investigators move on ostrich traders

Karen Zagor takes a look at the controversy building over the Ostrich Farming Corporation

The future does not look bright for investors with the Ostrich Farming Corporation (OFC). The company was ordered to cease trading by the High Court last week, and it is now the subject of a three-pronged investigation by the Department of Trade and Industry, the Advertising Standards Authority and the Serious Fraud Office.

The potential cost to investors could be enormous. The OFC ran an extremely effective marketing campaign in the latter months of last year. It took in £5.5 million between October and the end of December, and the money kept rolling in through March. It is estimated that at least 3,000 people could be affected.

Many investors feel that they have been kept in the dark by the Department of Trade and Industry, which filed a winding-up petition ten days ago. Although the DTI's actions have been far from hasty, it has not stated its reasons for the petition. Now, with a court hearing pending on May 8, neither the DTI nor the company can comment.

It is possible that the company will be cleared by the courts and that it will be able to continue trading. But whether it will ever be able to return to business as usual is uncertain.

If the court case fails, it will be a great embarrassment for the DTI. If the case succeeds,

the DTI may find itself even more embarrassed.

The Times discovered this week that the Securities and Investments Board (SIB), the chief City regulator, conducted

covered by the protective umbrella of the City regulators and are not eligible for compensation through the Investors Compensation Scheme. Meanwhile, investors do not

chairs, a chaise longue, the microwave and filing cabinets complete with their contents were gone. We were told the stuff had gone to marketing offices in Ollerton."

The Ostrich Sales and Marketing Corporation is based in New Ollerton, Nottingham. Brian Kitchell, OFC's managing director, is secretary and director of the New Ollerton company.

An action group for owners

Karen Zagor takes a look at an off-beat investment that is gaining in

Problems could hatch fr

Early warning: in late December, The Times was testing claims of huge returns

International hunt for Ostrich Farming

By Karen Zagor and Robert Mellor

International investors, many of whom are based in the United States, are being urged to raise money, OFC's agency brochures claimed that The Securities and Investments Board (SIB) had been investigating the company since late December.

Egg cracks: by April this year, investors were worried

know how their birds are faring. Nor can they be certain that there is a sufficient number to go around. For the moment, the Official Receiver is acting as provisional liquidator for the company, following a request by the President of the Board of Trade. The Receiver's job is "to protect and preserve the assets and financial records of the company" until the petition is heard. The SFO's involvement underscores the seriousness of the case.

Inquiries by The Times this week indicated that important documents went missing from OFC's Nottingham headquarters in the days before the Receiver moved in. A former employee said: "When we got in on Monday, the fridge-freezer, the coffee maker, two

Move to wind up ostrich farming company

Final act: winding-up nears is being formed by Stephen Whitmore of Wilsons, a Salisbury firm of solicitors, tel: 01722 412979. A tape-recorded message from the Receiver's office is on 0171 637-6605. The Insolvency Service number is: 0171 637-1110.

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Richard Thomson reports on the uncertainty plaguing American investors

Bonds fall prey to US market sentiment

You could hardly have got it more wrong if you tried, Jeffrey Vinik, manager of the \$56 billion Magellan Fund, America's largest mutual fund, loaded up with bonds at the worst moment. One day last February he poured millions into the market only hours before the worst single-day rout bonds had seen for eight years.

Since then, things have got worse. Something nasty is going on in the US bond market and Mr Vinik is only one victim. Bond prices were hammered again in March and yet again nine days ago. The yield on the benchmark 30-year Treasury bond, which rises as prices fall, has lurched from below 6 per cent to within a whisker of 7 per cent in a few weeks.

What has happened is that there has been a sharp change in sentiment over US interest rates. Bond prices usually fall on the back of what most people regard as good news, and so it has been recently.

Figures showing a sharp rise in employment suggested that the economy was stronger than expected, which in turn implied a rise in inflation, which further suggested that interest rates would have to rise to keep inflation under control.

Bonds hate rising interest rates, so bond prices fell. That is all a radical change from a couple of months ago when everyone was expecting interest rates to fall (which is why Mr Vinik piled into the bond market so disastrously).

The sell-off has been so sharp that it has prompted comparisons with early 1994 when a sudden change in market sentiment over interest rates sent bond prices into a nosedive.

Some analysts believe yields could still rise a lot further, to around 7.25 per cent in the near future.

At the same time, the stock market seems to have lost some of its bullishness, too. The same fear of inflation and rising interest rates triggered an 80-point fall in the Dow

Jones industrial average last Monday, but most of the market felt confident that prices would recover almost immediately. They didn't. Instead they fell for several days, pulling the Dow down 200 points, or nearly 4 per cent.

To many in the markets, the stock market's fall was necessary to catch up with bonds. They argued that the traditional relationship between the two markets had fallen out of sync in the last few weeks, and if bonds were not going to rise then shares had to decline.

Indeed, there is a growing number of market operators who believe that the bull market in shares has at last ground to a halt.

"The market has been overvalued for a long time," says Michael Metz, the equity strategist at Oppenheimer, the fund management group. "The market is in for a long-term decline."

What is particularly worrying is that for the first time in a long time the fall in prices has been broadly-based rather than concentrated in only a few big stocks.

Most of the bears expect a setback of at least 10 per cent



Over there: Tony Blair's trip to America underlines its importance to UK investors

gest monthly inflow, was still slightly lower than in February. This gives great hope to the market optimists.

All that money, after all, should help to buoy the market. They also believe that, although worries about rising interest rates are growing, there is no reason for share or bond prices to collapse.

"I'm not sure this is the start of a major decline," says Richard McCabe, chief market analyst at Merrill Lynch. "There will be a continuing bull market because, although interest rates may rise a bit in the near future, they will fall again later in the summer."

The pessimism in the bond market, thinks Blood, has simply been overdone. "Bonds will probably go sideways for a few months, with yields staying between about 6.5 per cent and 7 per cent."

That, he believes, is the worst that is likely to happen. After a few months, bond prices will then start to rise as the danger of rising interest rates passes and the market's fears are calmed. The stock market, meanwhile, will pick itself up, dust itself off and start another rally before the summer is out.

This is a persuasive point of view. Everything depends, of course, on what inflation does but there is not much evidence that it is about to burst out of its cage.

Certainly, the Fed is unlikely to lower interest rates any time soon but it is disappointment over that which seems to have sent the bond market into decline as much as any fear of rising rates. If the bond market realises this and levels out, the stock market should also regain heart.

The timing of all this, as always, is hard to predict. It is probably a mistake to start buying US stocks or bonds just yet, particularly while the markets are so turbulent. A waiting policy may be best for the next week or two while the real direction of the markets becomes clearer.

Sooner or later, however, it ought to be time to start looking around for bargains again after the price falls. Happy hunting.

The market has been overvalued for a long time. The market is in for a long-term decline

on the Dow — anything less would hardly count as a serious correction. Last week the market made half of that decline, but a further fall could feed a crucial element of panic into the market.

At the moment, however, panic is one thing that is signally lacking.

In fact, if you look at the amount ordinary investors are putting into the market you might think we are still in the middle of the greatest bull market this century. A staggering \$23 billion poured into a mutual fund (the US equivalent of unit trusts) in March which, although the third big-

gest monthly inflow, was still slightly lower than in February. This gives great hope to the market optimists.

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Sting taken out of vet fees

THE huge rise in the cost of veterinary surgeons' fees means treating sick or injured pets is becoming expensive and a number of insurance companies have set up policies to cover surgery, kennelling and liability costs for animals.

NFU Mutual has just launched a horse and pony policy for riders involved in show-jumping, hunting or hacking. Unaffiliated show-jumping or riding club activities are covered within the lowest class of use and pre-paid show entry fees of up to £500 are also covered should a horse be stolen or die before an event.

The increase in veterinary fees means cover has been increased to £2,000 per incident regardless of the number

of claims made in any one year. This also includes provision for up to £500 of alternative treatment, such as equine osteopathy or physiotherapy.

In addition to cover for theft or mysterious disappearance of horses and ponies, cover is now included for rescue, advertising and reward costs of up to £250 each.

Cover for personal liability has been reviewed and the indemnity limit increased to £5 million per occurrence — this reflects the current trend of high awards made in personal injury cases.

The policy is suitable for all horses and there is an optional extension for horse trailers covering not only accidental damage but also personal liability cover while the trailer is not attached to a motor

vehicle. For further details call 01933 228484.

□ The Association of Investment Trust Companies has put together a CD-Rom on the principles and composition of investment trusts, which is available from the AITC, Durrant House, 8-13 Chiswell Street, London EC2Y 4YY at a cost of £22.95 including VAT. Information: 0171 588 5347.

□ Nearly one fifth of Britain's 22.5 million households are under-insured, according to a survey of 1,000 homes by Eagle Star Direct. This means that £20 billion of property is at risk. The insurance company advises householders to check carefully that their insurance covers the full value of their home contents and to notify insurers when valuables are purchased.

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Watchdogs show their teeth as the mis-selling saga drags on



PENSIONS GUIDE

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7

Helen Pridham says regulators are planning tougher measures to ensure justice is full and final

osity of these terms, plus aggressive marketing by pension providers, led to over five million people contracting out of Serps.

Two groups of workers who may have been wrongly advised to contract out were those on low earnings and people above certain age limits. The largest category is expected to be those on incomes of, say, significantly less than £10,000 a year, whose rebates were relatively small and who took out pension plans with companies that imposed high charges.

Particularly hard hit are those who lost their jobs or stopped working two or three years after opting out, before their policies had acquired much value. Some companies continue to levy fixed charges even when no rebate is being invested, so the value of the

small. For those concerned, particularly if they are low earners, the amounts are important and will be even more so by the time they reach retirement.

The problem with making redress voluntary is that the best companies which have probably not done so much harm will volunteer, while the companies which have really

ruined people will not. However, there may be a simpler way of dealing with the matter than calling for a full review, such as letting companies pay a flat amount into policies that are affected.

Philip Telford, senior researcher of the Consumer Association's Money Group, said: "We would not be happy with any proposal by the regulators which resulted in anything less than those who had been mis-sold a personal pension in place of Serps receiving proper compensation. But if another, quicker solution to the problem can be found than a mandatory review, then this may be better for everyone involved — consumers and the pensions industry alike."

"We would certainly be disappointed to see a repeat of the difficulties which have arisen with the review of pension transfers and opt-outs. We hope that lessons have been learned and that any potential problems have already been thrashed out."

Next week the PIA is expected to announce a range of penalties it will impose on those which it identifies as not doing enough. These will include reprimands and fines. Offenders may also have to take out press advertisements setting out disciplinary charges against them.

PIA will also be publishing a list of companies that have agreed to waive their limitation rights, so that investors do not lose their legal rights because of the six-year time limit. Most life assurance companies are still extremely nervous about discussing what headway they are making with the pensions review.

One exception is Barclays Life. Nigel Jerome, who is heading up Barclays review

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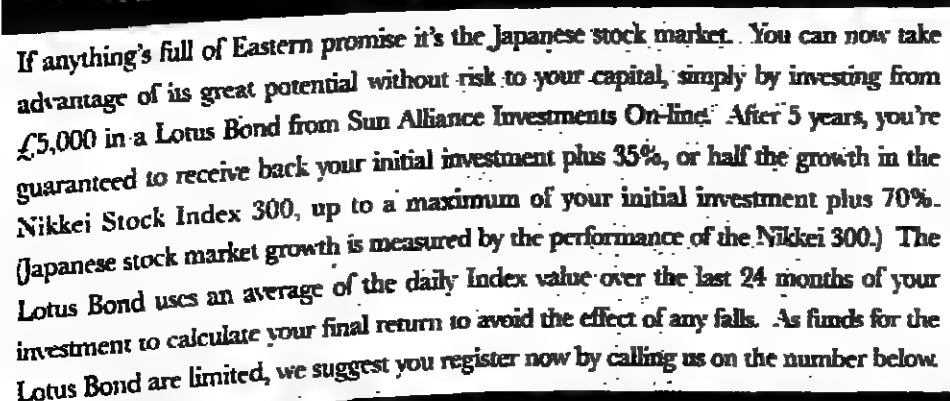
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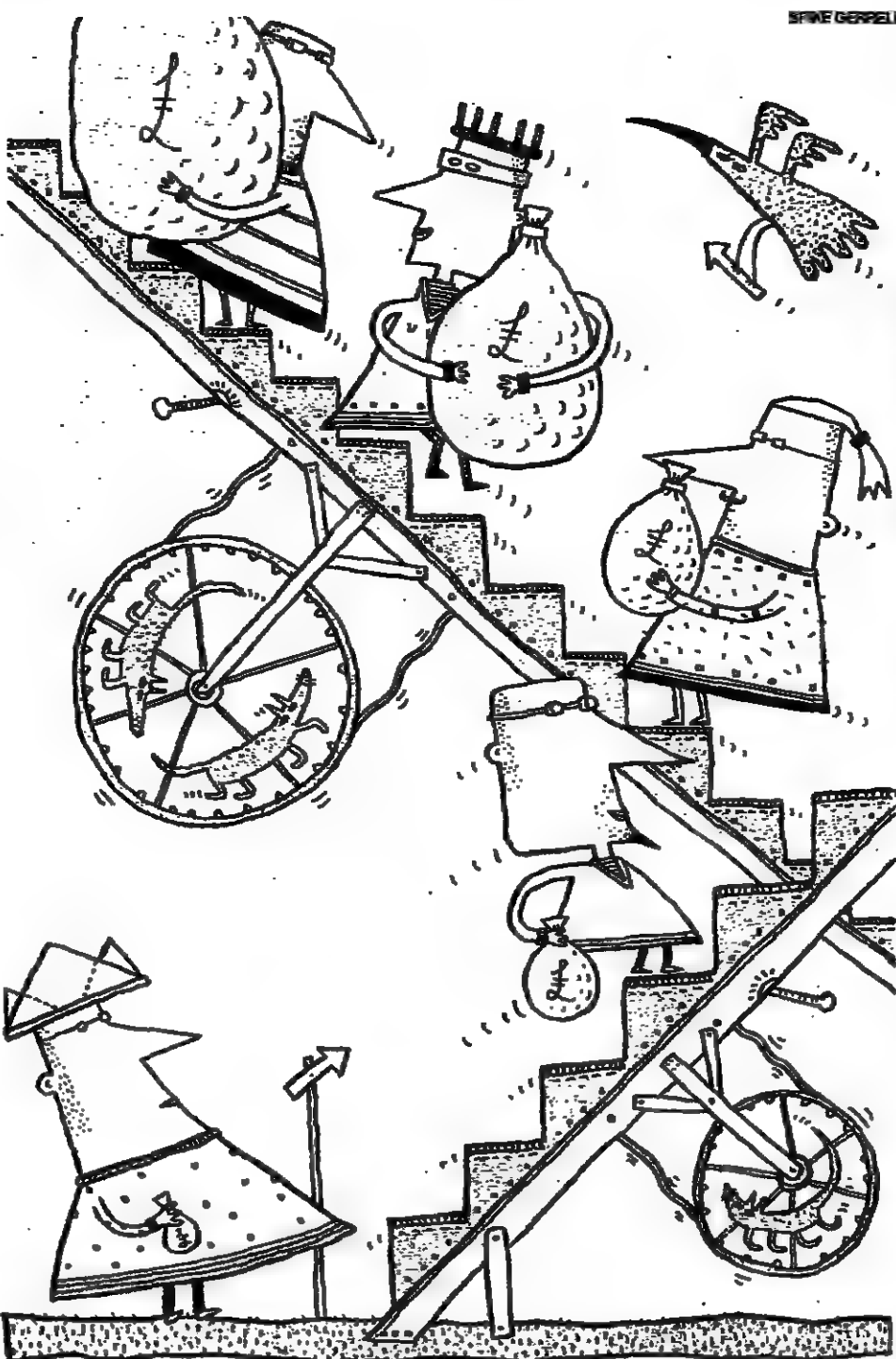
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Software to help with tax calculation

TOO many people are paying too much tax, according to the Consumers' Association, but because their records are incomplete they are unable to check exactly how much they should be paying (Marianne Curphey writes).

However, from now on you are legally obliged to keep a record of all income and capital gains in case you have to complete a tax return.

The Consumers' Association has put together a computer package called TaxCalc 1995-96 which claims to reduce the work involved in calculating tax and complying

with Inland Revenue requirements. On-screen prompts ask you to supply details of your income and outgoings and TaxCalc works out the minimum you are legally obliged to pay the Inland Revenue, and how much the Revenue may owe you.

The programme also lets you display and amend your figures, so you can judge the effects of changes in your circumstances. If you have a printer, you can print out your own Inland Revenue-approved tax returns and partners can even work simultaneously on two returns. It

includes an introduction to the Revenue's new policy of self-assessment and the CD-Rom version of TaxCalc includes the Inland Revenue video on self-assessment.

The programme also features the full text of a number of Inland Revenue tax advice leaflets on topics such as company cars, separation and divorce, and pensions.

TaxCalc also includes a comprehensive glossary and over 45 tax-saving tips. It costs £29.99 or £24.99 for members of the Consumers' Association and is available by calling Freephone 0800 252100.

A funny old game, but the club's done well

Sarah Jones looks into the pros and cons of investing in football

This week watching shares in football clubs has been as exciting as the players' performances on the pitch.

As Manchester United moved ever closer to the FA Carling Premiership title, and with it the promise of riches in the European superleague, so its shares added 40p.

And as Millwall sank towards the relegation zone, its shares took another dive.

Meanwhile stockbrokers have reported an unprecedented amount of interest in the Chelsea launch on the Alternative Investment Market.

Football clubs are becoming more and more like proper businesses, helped by lucrative television deals, corporate hospitality and strong merchandise sales.

"More clubs are realising that they have got a brand with value and are starting to market that brand," said Justin Urquhart Stewart, of Barclays Stockbrokers.

"Those that are doing well are in fact no longer football clubs but sports and leisure companies," he added. The latest float on the Alternative Investment Market (AIM) — Chelsea — is a case in point.

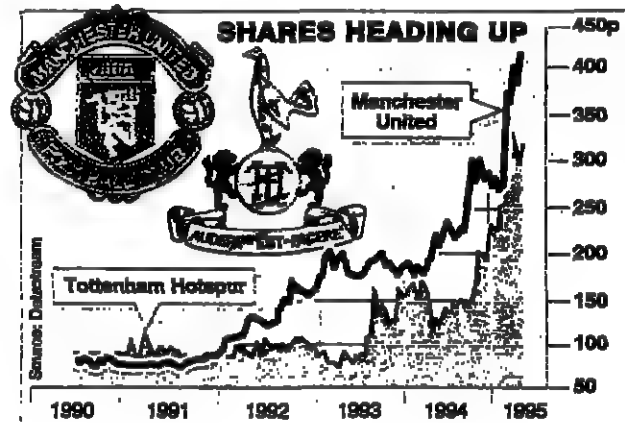
Investors are buying into not just the football club but Chelsea Village Plc, its parent company, which also has catering, clothing and hotel subsidiaries. A health club and gymnasium at the ground are due to open soon. "It won't be long before the ancillary activities are earning more than the football club," said Robert Ellis, Chelsea's stockbroker.

Mr Ellis believes that Chelsea has a bright future. He expects its now developing leisure complex to help the club to rival or even surpass Manchester United.

Stockbrokers are surprised by the amount of interest in the Chelsea



Share boosters: Manchester United's Ryan Giggs, left, and Chelsea's Rudi Voller show on-pitch success is reflected in the price



a shareholding, the chances are that they will also attend games regularly and buy the ever-changing strip.

There are three clubs — Manchester United, Tottenham

Hotspur and Millwall — quoted on the stock market. Spurs' shares were launched in 1983 at 100p, reached a low when they were temporarily suspended in 1990 and then with the arrival of goal-scoring Jürgen Klinsmann started rising. They are now 310p.

Shares in Manchester United were offered at 385p in 1991. Within three years they had gained more than £3 and there was a bonus issue of four shares for every one held. This diluted the share price but it has continued to rise, especially as the season reaches its climax. Ten days ago the shares were 287p, now they are 346p.

Millwall's failure is a salutary tale. The shares

were issued at 20p in 1989 but relegation and repeated failure to get back into the Premiership, with all the revenue from higher gates, TV deals and sponsorship that the top flight brings, has seen the shares slump to 2½p. It still matters what a team does on the field. The greater the reliance on football income, the more volatile the share price will be. But with a club like Manchester United, which is running as a sport and leisurewear company, the share price will be more stable," said Mr Urquhart Stewart.

That leaves all the other clubs. Many will be quoted on Ofex (the unregulated off-exchange market). Transactions are on a matched buyer basis through a stockbroker — if you want to buy 50 shares, someone else must be willing to sell them.

The smaller the club, the more difficult that will be and it is often a matter of contacting the club secretary to see if anyone wants to sell.

So should we invest in football clubs? "Only if you are a devoted fan," said Mr Urquhart Stewart. "Manchester United and Spurs have proved good investments, but with most clubs you'd be better off showing your love and devotion by purchasing a scarf."

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But having such excellent performance is what you might expect from a company that has an international reputation for keeping costs under control. In October, Money Management showed the effects of our charges in our with-profits pension to be the lowest of all the companies surveyed.

In fact, the effect of other companies' charges were, on average, 103% more, while in the worst case they were 209% more. (Source: Money Management, October 1995, £200pm 10 year personal pension plans).

So, if you would like to learn about The Equitable's high performance, low cost personal pension plan by post and by telephone, return the coupon below or call (0950) 38 48 58.

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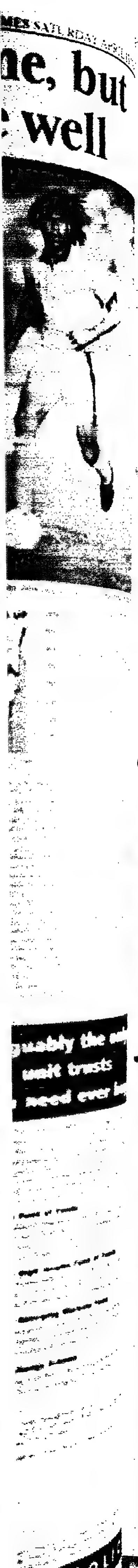
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PORTFOLIO



Barclays launches schools software

BARCLAYS Bank has launched a PC-based school banking package. There are currently 200 Barclays school banks operating, enabling children to complete most of the transactions available in a high-street branch, such as paying in their money and requesting a statement.

The PC-based package will provide an additional way for pupils to access their account, at the same time as learning about finance and money management. For more information, call 0800 400100.

□ A guide to pensions, Peps, education mortgages and other ethical investment plans has been published by Eiris, the Ethical Investment Research Service. *Money & Ethics* examines the ethical policies of 28 unit and investment trusts and compares the funds against a common set of criteria, with topics ranging from water pollution to animal testing. The handbook includes a step-by-step guide to choosing the fund that most closely meets your ethical needs. Send a cheque for £12.50, payable to Eiris, 504 Bondway Business Centre, 71 Bondway, London SW8 1SQ.

□ Pensioners could be mis-

ing out on as much as £600 million a year in unclaimed welfare benefits, according to Help the Aged's latest booklet, *Can You Claim It?* The booklet emphasises that it is important to claim, even if a pensioner is only entitled to a small amount, as it is the passport to a range of other benefits including free dental treatment and sight tests.

The charity has also produced a *Claiming Disability Benefits* guide, which provides details of the benefits that are available for senior citizens who are sick or disabled, and for their carers.

For a free copy of both booklets, send a self-addressed envelope to: The Information Development Centre, Help the Aged, St James's Walk, London, EC1R 0BE.

□ The *Eiris & Young Tax Saver's Companion 1996* provides up to date tax information, including changes announced in the November 1995 Budget and 1996 Finance Bill. The guide highlights tax-saving opportunities and offers advice on self-assessment and financial planning. Available in bookshops from April 25, priced at £9.99.

LIZANNE ROSE

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

ANNUAL INCOME Rates as at April 11, 1996

Investment (£)	Company	Guaranteed Rate (%)
1 Year		
5,000	AIG Life	5.00
10,000	AIG Life	5.10
20,000	AIG Life	5.20
50,000	AIG Life	5.30
2 Years		
5,000	AIG Life	5.58
10,000	Premium Life	5.83
20,000	Premium Life	5.93
50,000	Premium Life	6.03
3 Years		
5,000	AIG Life	5.82
10,000	AIG Life	6.07
20,000	AIG Life	6.12
50,000	AIG Life	6.27
4 Years		
5,000	AIG Life	6.02
10,000	AIG Life	6.32
20,000	AIG Life	6.42
50,000	AIG Life	6.47
5 Years		
1,000	Premium Life	5.60
3,000+	Pinnacle-Insur	6.75

Source: Charitable Endowment of Bond (0171-434 4322). Not rated. Income and capital guaranteed. Early surrender. Terms vary. Monthly income may be available.

FIXED RATE

Gross coupon	Buying price	Gross yield	Issue price	Minimum purchase
Birmingham Midshires 9.375%	97.49	9.807	100.17	1,000
Bradford & Bingley 11.625%	119.54	9.713	100.13	10,000
Bradford & Bingley 13.000%	133.83	9.697	100.20	10,000
British & West 13.375%	138.47	9.643	100.34	1,000
British & West 13.000%	132.40	9.822	100.42	1,000
Coventry 12.125%	125.37	9.548	100.75	1,000
First National 11.750%	115.14	10.197	100.25	10,000
Halifax 8.750%	92.74	9.435	100.62	50,000
Halifax 12.000%	124.67	9.426	100.28	50,000
Halifax 12.000%	124.67	9.426	100.28	50,000
Leeds & Holbeck 13.375%	137.27	9.734	100.50	1,000
Newcastle 10.750%	113.79	9.435	100.32	1,000
Newcastle 12.875%	133.21	9.455	100.46	1,000
Northern Rock 12.625%	135.89	9.271	100.14	1,000
Skipton 12.675%	133.15	9.552	100.48	1,000

FLOATING RATE

Gross coupon	Buying price	Gross yield	Issue price	Minimum purchase
Cheshire (28/09-21/03) 8.5875%	103.83	100.00	1,000	1,000
First Nat (20/03-20/09) 8.70625%	100.83	100.00	1,000	1,000

PBS = Permanent Interest-Bearing Shares. Source: AMRO Home Govest - 0171 601 0101

CREDIT CARDS BEST BUYS

Card type Interest per month APR% Fee per annum

Robert Fleming/S&P 0800 829024	MasterCard/Visa	0.92% C	11.50%	NIL
Robert Fleming/S&P 0800 829024	MasterCard/Visa	1.00%	14.00%	£12
Fitzell Bank 0800 573191	MasterCard/Visa	1.17%	16.10%	£11

PERSONAL LOANS BEST BUYS

Monthly payment on £3,000 for 3yrs with insurance

APR	£117.68	£102.09
14.50%	£114.41	£102.58
14.50%	£115.52	£102.49

NB: A = 2% bonus if Account opened by 30.4.96. G = no interest free period. D = for debt consolidation only. E = Available to comprehensive F&M Insurance policy holders over 22 years. F = Fixed Rate (all other rates variable). G = Annual rate 5% above R. Flanking base rate. CM denotes interest paid on maturity. P = By Post only.

* RATES SHOWN ARE GROSS AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE. PLEASE CHECK RATES BEFORE INVESTING.

Source: Moneyfacts, the Monthly Guide to Investment & Mortgage Rates (01652 500 877)

LARGER LENDERS

Interest rate % Loan size Max % Notes

Building Societies	0.95	£15k+	90	Fixed to 31.1.97
Bristol & West 0800 100117	0.98	to £100k	90	8.25% discount to 1.5.97
Northern Rock 0800 591 500	0.74	to £150k	95	6% disc-6 mths, 2% disc-18 mths
Yorkshire 0800 378835				
Barclays 0800 494969	3.50	£15k+	90	3.75% discount for 12 months
NatWest 0800 400999	1.75	£15k+	90	5.50% discount for 12 months

LARGER LOANS

Interest rate % Loan size Max % Notes

Building Societies	0.49	£15k+	75	Fixed to 31.7.97
Nottingham Imper. 0115 5617220	0.11	to £150k	70	7.14% discount for 6 months
Hill & Raby 01422 333333	0.25	to £150k	70	Fixed for 1 year
Scarlborough 0800 590547				
Bank of Ireland 01734 510100	0.98	£20-145k	95	5.75% disc-5 mths, 4.49% disc-6 mths
Nat West 0800 400999	1.75	£15k+	90	5.50% discount for 12 months

NATIONAL SAVINGS

Gross rate At tax rates 40% Mtd/maximum Investment £ Notice Contact

Ordinary A/c	2.00	1.50	1.20	10-10,000	0141849555
Investment A/c	5.25	3.94	3.15	20-500**	0141849555
Income Bond*	6.50	4.88	3.80	200,000-25,000**	01233766161
First Opt Bond	6.25	4.68	3.70	100,000-20,000**	01418362558
43rd Index Unit	5.35			100-10,000	01913884900
Children's Bonus	0.75			25-1,000	01418362558
Gen. Ex. Rate	3.51			20-250,000	01418362558
Capital Bonds	6.65	4.98	3.98	100-10,000	01913884900
9th Index Unit	2.50			100-10,000	01913884900
Perpetual Bond SS	7.00	5.25	4.20	500-50,000	01233766161

* First £70 (£140) of tax free, then 10% up to £100. Additional 10% up to £20,000 for married couples. ** Tax free. * Rates gross and 40% discount when held for 5 years. 0.3% net bonus for £20,000+; £100,000+ in addition to S1 and S2 holdings. * Available but not in full - limited money supply.

PENSION ANNUITIES

All figures are the gross annual annuity (£100,000 purchase), guaranteed 5 years, paid monthly in advance

Building Societies	
Nottingham Imper.	0.49
0115 5617220	
Hinckley & Rugby	0.11
0800 774483	
Scarborough	0.25
0800 590547	
Banks	
Bank of Ireland	0.99
01734 510100	
Nat. West	1.75
0800 400989	

* Minimum purchase £100,000. Higher rates for articles. Source: Annuity Direct (0171 588 8383)

FIRST-TIME BUYERS

Interest rate % Loan size Max % Notes

Building Societies	0.71	£15k+	95	6.54% disc-6 mths, 2.5% disc-6 mths
Bristol & West 0800 100117	4.39	any	95	2.80% discount to 30.6.99
Brad & Bingley 01274 555555	3.19	£30k+	95	3.00% discount for 1 year

LARGER LENDERS

Interest rate % Loan size Max % Notes

Building Societies	0.49	£15k+	75	Fixed to 31.7.97
Nottingham Imper. 0115 5617220	0.11	to £150k	70	7.14% discount for 6 months
Hill & Raby 01422 333333	0.25	to £150k	70	Fixed for 1 year
Scarlborough 0800 590547				
Bank of Ireland 01734 510100	0.98	£20-145k	95	5.75% disc-5 mths, 4.49% disc-6 mths
Nat West 0800 400999	1.75	£15k+	90	5.50% discount for 12 months

Larger lenders, larger loans, first-time buyers tables by Eiris's Guides. 01788 880482.

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When the system fails to offer an explanation for loss

From Mr W. Dorward

Sir, Your article on cheque clearance ("What a difference a day makes, *Weekend Money*, March 30) might be supplemented by reference to the experience of those who, like me, have monthly remittances sent directly from an overseas bank to a UK bank, in my case Barclays.

My pension is paid into the Standard Chartered Bank in Hong Kong. By standing order, I have a certain sum remitted by airmail, bank to bank, on the first of the month. An advice is sent to me from the bank in Hong Kong at the same time and usually arrives about the sixth or seventh of the month, so it is reasonable to assume that the Standard Chartered Bank's cheque reaches Barclays Bank the same day.

It generally appears on my statement at the end of the month as having been credited about the eighth of the month, but, on the odd occasion when I have needed the funds urgently, I have been advised that in fact it takes up to five working days to clear and is not available for that time or most of it.

Leaving aside the valid question as to why it should take five days to clear a bank cheque, I also wonder who has my money between the time it is debited to my account in Hong Kong on the first of the month and the time it is

available for my use about the fifteenth. It must be somewhere. Yours faithfully, WILLIAM DORWARD, Waulkmill, Skirling, Biggar, Lanarkshire.

From Mr W. Farrar

Sir, This letter is prompted by the article (*Weekend Money*, March 30) on cheque clearance allied to snail-mail.

On January 11 I posted a £4,000 personal cheque from Pontefract to C&G by post at Fareham, Hampshire. It was in a C&G 1st class prepaid window envelope, with the address machine printed on the enclosed, paying-in slip.

Case for Pensioners Guaranteed Bonds

From Mr O. Hare

Sir, I refer to Mr Shock's letter of March 30 concerning National Savings Pensioners Guaranteed Income Bonds. Even at 7 per cent (earlier this year, the rate on Series 2 was 7.5 per cent) the choice between them and gilts seems to me debatable, since there is no commission to pay on buying or selling (as there is with gilts purchased through the National Savings Stock Register), the interest is paid monthly, as opposed to half-yearly, and the penalty of 60 days loss of interest on encashment before the expiry date may well be considerably less than would be foregone following an enforced sale of

C&G received it on February 21 (almost six weeks later) via the Royal Mail dead-letter office in Belfast.

The Royal Mail's explanation (excuse?) was that the address was partly obscured, but admitted that the delay was too long, the turnaround at that time being ten days. I wonder if the item just got lost in the system (eg, stuck at the bottom of a mailbox). Whatever it was, I am the poorer by the loss of interest over six weeks, for which the Royal Mail accepts no responsibility. Yours faithfully, WALTER FARRAR, 1 Barnsley Road, Ackworth, Pontefract.

the gilts before redemption date.

Yours faithfully, OWEN HARE, 32 Trafalgar Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire.

Letters or information for *Weekend Money* may be sent by fax to 0171-782 5062. Letters should include a daytime telephone number. *The Times* regrets it cannot always give individual replies or advice and asks that original documents are not sent in. No legal responsibility can be accepted for advice or statements in these columns and independent professional advice should be sought.

Handout? Handout? Oh the 1½% handout

From Mr R. Ellis

Sir, (Revenue has eye on £17 billion handouts, March 23). When, in 1988, the Bolton Building Society merged with C&G and, in 1991, the Southampton Building Society was taken over, I benefited by a

misery 1½ per cent in each case and tax was deducted at 25 per cent. So what's new? Yours sincerely, REGINALD ELLIS, 4 Ringstead Court, Ringstead Road, Sutton, Surrey.

'Massive handouts' means our own little mass: Shareholders will each get what amounts to seven and six of the old money. That's after tax



Alternative route to US rental car insurance

From Mr M. Millwood

Sir, The plight of Mr France and Ms Pilkington concerning their motor accident in the US and the subsequent threat of litigation for which Mr France is not insured ("The right route for US car insurance", March 23) prompts me to reveal to your readers a cheap way to avoid such problems.

While collision damage waiver for small and medium-sized rental cars in the US is currently \$13.99 a day or £61 a week, if purchased with the tour company in this country it can be secured for £5.50 a

day through the Swire Fraser Insurance Company. The essential "top up" insurance, not purchased by Mr France and giving liability cover for up to \$1 million, can be purchased for £55 for a 15-day holiday from the same insurance company.

By using them for a 15-day rental of a medium-sized car the cost is £132, against £210 quoted by tour companies. Yours sincerely, MIKE MILLWOOD, 15 Bay View Road, Benlloch, Ynys Mon.

Unit-linked loser asks why

From Mr N. Uberti

Sir, with reference to the comment (March 30) on Clerical Medical's change of heart. I have had a 10-year savings plan since 1988, with only two years to maturity but am excluded from the takeover bonus as it is unit-linked.

I am a long-term customer who has contributed to Clerical Medical's wealth... as well as the with-profits holders. Why am I excluded? Yours sincerely, NEEL UBERTI, "Woodlands", Firs Road, Kenley, Surrey.

PRIVATISATION PERFORMANCES

SHARE	ISSUE DATE	CHANGE ON ISSUE PRICE AS OF 31.1.96 (%)
Aeroham	February 1992	488.82
Assoc. British Ports	February 1993	735.71
	April 1994	248.87
British Aerospace	July 1981	494.67
	September 1985	137.87
British Airports Authority	July 1987	296.73
British Airways	February 1987	323.60
British Gas	December 1986	77.04
British Petroleum	June 1977	550.71
	October 1979	336.78
	September 1983	264.48
British Steel	October 1987	60.15
British Telecom	December 1988	87.40
	December 1984	174.23
	December 1991	8.42
	July 1993	-13.05
Cable and Wireless	November 1981	1467.50
	November 1983	546.55
	March 1985	202.90
Enterprise Oil	June 1984	98.92
Rolls-Royce	May 1987	20.00
National Power	March 1991	149.14
	February 1995	28.24
PowerGen	March 1991	193.71
	February 1995	38.92
Scottish Power	June 1991	58.83
Scottish Hydro	June 1991	47.92
Northern Ireland Elec.	June 1993	88.15
Regional Elec. Companies		
Eastern Electricity Plc	November 1990	306.25
East Midlands Electricity Plc	November 1990	155.31
London Electricity Plc	November 1990	158.57
Manweb Plc	November 1990	312.50
Midlands Electricity Plc	November 1990	225.00
Northern Electricity Plc	November 1990	148.25
NORWEB Plc	November 1990	
SEEBORAD Plc	November 1990	348.17
Southern Electric Plc	November 1990	245.00
South Wales Electricity Plc	November 1990	253.75
South Western Electricity Plc	November 1990	302.08
Yorkshire Electricity Plc	November 1990	199.58
Water Companies		
Anglian Water Plc	November 1989	135.63
Northumbrian Water Grp Plc	November 1989	391.25
North West Water Group Plc	November 1989	
Severn Trent Plc	November 1989	157.50
Southern Water Plc	November 1989	186.87
South West Water Plc	November 1989	108.33
Thames Water Plc	November 1989	128.25
Welsh Water Plc	November 1989	207.50
Wessex Water Plc	November 1989	39.58
Yorkshire Water Plc	November 1989	155.00
National Grid	December 1995	-1.47

1 Taken over by Hanson @ 975p

2 Taken over by Scottish Power @ 980p

3 Merged with North West Water

4 Taken over by Central & Western of USA @ 535.4p

5 Merging with Welsh Water

6 Taken over by Southern Electric of USA @ 985p

7 Taken over by Lyonnais @ 1175p

8 Merged with Norweb to form United Utilities

9 Merging with South Wales Electricity

Source: *Privatisation, The Facts* published by Price Waterhouse

More detailed privatisation statistics next week

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Anachronistic opening should soothe fevered brows amid clamour for change

Limbering up for a season of uncertainty

BY ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

IT IS an apologetic start for a potentially apocalyptic cricket season. Public clamour for change in the game is at fever pitch and the demand is for a tearing down of all things traditional. Yet, on a chilly second Saturday of April, anachronism is defiantly sustained as the first-class programme opens — weather permitting — with a game between Oxford University and Leicestershire.

There were years when this was a comforting ritual, as gently springlike as the smell of new-mown grass, but that was in less turbulent times. Now, in the violent backwash of a World Cup that concentrated minds on the inadequacies of English cricket as seldom before, there is something frustratingly footling about the season starting with an inconsequential and largely unnoticed shiver in The Parks.

The witnesses to this ancient and obsolete tradition will be the usual mixture of enthusiasts emerging from hibernation, noting their attendance like train-spotter's marking down another engine and ruminating on many a previous opening day. The occasion, and the setting, are quintessentially English, which is the abiding dilemma for the proponents of modernism and revolution.

Like it or not, there is still a unique attraction about the measured tread of the domestic season. There is even something quaint, almost worth preservation, about the triviality in Oxford today, but, if quality control were imposed, little would survive.

It is the heightened awareness of this that will dominate the coming months, for all cricket this season is destined to be played in a studied limbo, rather like a decaying house with a disputed demolition order.

One of the standing jokes about cricket in England is that nothing ever changes, yet there is evident scope for 1996 to alter that perception.

Behind the familiar scenes, activity will be focused on two significant fronts — the administration of the game at all levels in England and the management and preparation of the national team. By the autumn, substantial streamlining should have taken place in both areas. If it has not, those responsible will have the state of English cricket on their consciences.

Soon, we are assured, the Test and County Cricket Board (TCCB), with its unwieldy chains of command and its tendency to a self-sustaining parochialism, will give way to a new and better body, the English Cricket Board. The difference remains unfathomable to most, but, if it achieves nothing else, it must bestow decision-making powers on its executives to bypass the bureaucratic bottleneck that so impedes advancement in the game.

Simultaneously, and with far greater public appreciation, the working party chaired by David Aspinall is trying to identify how the declining fortunes of the England team can be arrested and reversed. There is a small, select gathering with a formidable assignment: at the very least, they deserve the guarantee that their recommendations will be respected, by the counties who must consider them, rather more than the binned and pigeon-holed offerings of previous such committees.

In fairness, there are distinct signs of stirring in the shires. For too long, too many counties have concerned themselves with their local priorities even at the evident expense of the national inter-



Richard Shula, head groundsman at The Parks, spent yesterday preparing for the start of the cricket season. Oxford University meet Leicestershire today

est. Perhaps this is changing, judging by the encouraging acceptance of three points for a draw in the county championship this year, and of playing games from Wednesday to Saturday, without the ludicrous interruption of a 40-overs game, as from next year.

These may seem minor changes, but they represent a notable shift of thinking, an acknowledgement that all is not well; and it is by such fine-tuning that benefits will accrue, rather than by the apologetic blustering that has unhappily raged since England returned home prematurely from the World Cup.

In a few weeks, the game has suffered the shambles of an aborted election for the

chairmanship of the selection committee and, now, potential chaos from a gratuitously over-subscribed application list of selectors. This has been accompanied by such a chorus of unhelpful and often uninformed rhetoric from the chairman and chief executives of various counties that fresh directives on those who should make public comments, and when, can shortly be expected from the disciplinary arm of the TCCB.

It has been a troubled start to spring, the debacles too high, the logic too low. Maybe, after all, it needs a day like today, in that timelessness, that country-in-the-city feel of The Parks, to soothe some fevered brows.

Wintry outlook at The Parks

THE bad weather that returned yesterday threw up the prospect of an opening day at The Parks spent watching the rain streaking down the pavilion windows, with intervals for the occasional watery pitch inspection and three-sweater forays to loosen up on the outfield.

Oxfordshire cricket may be discredited as a first-class force, but the counties show no rush to give up on their early-season visits. Opportunities beckon for young players, among them Gregor Macmillan and Darren Maddy, who will open the

innings for Leicestershire. Macmillan, who led Oxford to victory in the University match last year, scoring an unbeaten hundred, starts his first full county season despite the handicap of a hairline fracture in his hand.

Maddy gets his chance to establish himself after Nigel Briers, who stepped down as Leicestershire captain at the end of last season, was ruled out for the first two months of the campaign after knee surgery. Oxford are captained this year by Chinmay Gupta.

Mark Benson, the Kent captain, will miss the start of

the season because of a knee injury sustained in training. Kent begin with a Benson and Hedges Cup tie against British Universities on April 26.

India, the first of the summer's touring teams, continues their indifferent one-day form yesterday with a 38-run defeat by Pakistan in the opening match of the Sharjah one-day tournament.

Aamir Sohail, leading Pakistan in the absence of the injured Wasim Akram, laid the foundation for his side's victory with a century off 127 balls, his fifth hundred in limited-overs internationals.

Britain fail to learn lessons of defeats on world stage

FROM NORMAN DE MESQUITA IN EINDHOVEN

GREAT Britain's ice hockey players had a rest from world championship competition here yesterday, although they did practise. The need to eliminate unnecessary penalties when they face Poland and Holland today and tomorrow should have been their priority.

After another rest day on Monday, Britain face Japan on Tuesday and, to survive in pool B, must win at least two of these three games. It was interesting that, after their 6-1 loss to Latvia, the Japan coaching staff said that they were satisfied with their team's performance and described it as a learning experience.

So far, Britain appear to have learnt nothing and the lack of discipline in the first two games has cost them dear. In those games, opponents have been given 17 power plays and seven of the 13 goals conceded have come with a Britain player in the penalty box.

The average age of the squad is another factor in the disappointing performances and Peter Woods, the coach, chose to play Paul Dixon, 22, rather than Terry Kurtenbach, 33, in the final period of the game against Switzerland.

It is time that some attention was paid to the future and room must be found in the squad for talented young British-born and trained players rather than ageing Canadians, many of whom are only in Britain because they were not good enough to forge a significant career in Canada.

The future of the domestic game continues to be clouded in uncertainty, but it could become clearer after a meeting in Blackpool this weekend, that will be attended by those clubs not in the proposed Super League.

The Super League is back to seven teams with the addition of Ayr, but exactly when their 3,000-seat Centrum will be ready seems to be yet another unknown factor. After ten years of stability, British ice hockey seems not to know where exactly it is going and some positive news is overdue.

Coaches in collision with forces of law and order

I THINK, as sporting assaults go, that one policeman equals two referees, so I had better give these stories equal billing. The policeman was allegedly assaulted by the coach of Real Betis football team in Spain; the referees by the coach of Leithbridge Hurricanes ice hockey team in Canada (so they do notice such things out there).

First to Spain, where Lorenzo Serra Ferrer, the Real Betis team coach, was given a parking ticket by a policeman who supported their city rivals, Sevilla. Ferrer reacted angrily, and was locked up for four hours, accused of kicking the copper; the coach denies it. "The whole incident is because of the pain of our 21-point advantage over Sevilla," Manuel Ruiz de Lopera, the Real Betis owner, said. He said that the policeman was responsible for the fact that Real Betis dropped a couple of points by drawing 2-2 with Racing Santander last weekend. Incidentally, Diego Maradona was once briefly a Sevilla player; he was given a speeding ticket by a policeman who supported Real Betis.

Meanwhile, up in moose country, Bryan Maxwell, coach of the Hurricanes, was a trifle upset after two late penalties allowed Regina Pats to sneak a 6-5 victory. Maxwell took on both Brent Reiber, the referee, and Jeff Klick, a linesman. He has been suspended for a year and fined Can\$1,000 (£500). He has been banned from attending games until February 1997. He is also due to appear in court next month, charged with uttering threats. Herman Elfring, the Hurricanes' president, said that he was disappointed at the length of the suspension.

Lend a hand

No sign of John Major's cricket bat in the Long Room at Lord's, but the baseball glove of George Bush, the former United States President, is to go on show in the Baseball Hall of Fame. Bush played first base for Yale in 1947 and 1948. He was captain, and the team won the National College Athletic Association Championship in both years. Bush played 51 games

SIMON BARNES
On Saturday

and had a batting average of 251 with 23 RBIs.

Doubtful digit

Now for news of the most important single finger in the history of sport. Its owner is, of course, Shane Warne ... and the nature of the golden digit's continuous state of injury has become one of life's great mysteries. Now, Warne is planning a trip to the United States for laser treatment. "Definitely not a desperation move," Warne said; but he confesses to worry: "I want to get back to bowling my main delivery, the big leg

I hope it's just your poorly finger you showing me Mr Warne.



break. It is the ball I have built my game around, but it is also the ball that seems to have done some damage to the finger. The sooner it is fixed, the better. A lot of people seem to be talking about my spinning finger and just what is wrong. I have to say I have had just about enough of it all."

Price of progress

This column will not be taking part in the Flora London Marathon next weekend. The event, one of sport's instant traditions, seems always to have been with us, always the same, but this is not quite true.

The winning woman will get \$55,000 (about £37,500); with appearance money and time bonuses, it could be a great deal more. If Liz McColgan wins in a very fast time, she could be on for \$200,000. In 1981, the prize for the first woman home was a watch ... and the prize for the third place, feminists everywhere, was an iron.

Scoring again

I have not mentioned Pelé's vasectomy for ages. You will be delighted to learn that the operation to reverse it seems to have been a complete success. At the age of 55, he is to become a father again.

Comfort food

In this country, we have still barely scratched the surface of the true purpose of attending sporting events. In the United States, they are much clearer: sport is about eating. Take San Francisco Giants. They may not be terribly good at baseball — they are expected to finish bottom of the National League West — but they have responded to a poor playing record by going for the most elaborate menu in sport. Foot-long hotdogs? Fair. At what is now 3-Com Park, formerly Candlestick Park, you can eat calamari, grilled ahi, lime-scented pork and tomato chili, fajita salad, and chicken breast and corn chilli in cumin-infused broth. I hope losing is good for the digestion.

Flag fatality

Now for a grim one. Recently, Daniel Tosquelles, a supporter of the Uruguayan team, Nacional, was shot dead at a football match. He was trying to protect an 11-year-old boy, whose flag was being stolen by Cerro fans. Now, someone has been accused of his murder: a 15-year-old boy.

King leads domestic challenge at Belton

BY JENNY MACARTHUR

MARY KING, a winner of a team gold medal and an individual bronze at the European three-day event championships in Italy last year, will give King William and Star Appeal, her Olympic Games contenders, a final outing before Badminton at the Belton Pedigree Churn Horse Trials in Lincolnshire this weekend.

Belton's big, technical course provides ideal preparation for Badminton and the trials have attracted most of the sport's leading names. Lucy Thompson, of Ireland, the European champion, and Mark Todd, of New Zealand, the dual Olympic champion, lead the overseas challenge.

British riders include William Fox-Pitt and Ian Stark, winners of their sections at Brigstock last week, and Kristina Gifford and Charlotte Bathe, members of the gold medal-winning team in Italy last year.

King, whose first child, Emily, was born at the end of January, has barely been out of action. She was riding two weeks after the birth and, last month, won at Dyrnes Hall, on King William, and was third, on Star Appeal, her 1995 Punchestown winner.

This weekend, if the going is as good as expected, King will let both horses "bowl on". With Karen Dixon (Too Smart and Get Smart) and Gifford (Midnight Blue and General Jock), King has a chance of being selected for Atlanta for both the individual and team contests.

Todd looks to have one of the best chances this weekend with Bertie Blunt, one of his two Badminton entries and a winner at Belton last year. Though successful in one-day horse trials, the partnership has yet to complete a four-star event. At Burghley two years ago, Todd was eliminated after missing out a flag on the roads and tracks phase. At Badminton last year, where Todd rode most of the cross-country with only one stirrup, Bertie Blunt failed the final horse inspection.

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THE TIMES SATURDAY APRIL 13 1996

Amateur champion learns Masters lesson on eve of professional career

Sherry joins Friday trunk slammers



ANDREW LONGMORE
At The Masters

The Kilmarnock FC cap will have to be consigned to the shelf along with the amateur status. This morning, Gordon Sherry can wake up, shout into the shaving mirror "I am a professional" and start piling up his first million. From now on, the cap will be home to sponsors' logos only and the head full of the habitually anxious thoughts of the professional golfer.

The change was not meant to occur this early. Monday morning was the scheduled moment for crossing the bar, but the Augusta National golf course had the final say, reducing the British Amateur champion to the same fate as most of his predecessors and lending him perspective to some of the wider claims made on his behalf. Bob Torrance even suggested the young Scot could win the tournament. For all his natural modesty and good humour, Sherry half believed it.

"In one sense, it's been the worst experience of my golfing life," he said. "I haven't shot scores like that for four years. But in the long term, it will stand me in good stead. The most important thing now is that I can concentrate on my career."

Reality dawned early on the opening day, which ended in a 78, and yesterday's honourable round of 77 was not nearly good enough to banish the two most dreaded words in the professionals' vocabulary — missed cut. Or, as they say in the States, a trunk slammer, the trunk being the boot of the car, the term a reference to slamming the boot shut on a Friday night with the clubs inside. He may as well start getting the lingo right.

To be fair to Sherry, he was just beginning to get the life of the land when the land ran out. Another two days of education and he might have become the first British amateur to break par for a round, because he was striking the ball well enough and often into

the right places. His outward half was one over, six shots better than his first attempt, and included three missed birdie putts, the sort that will need to drop if he is to make a living as a professional.

But a horrible second shot to the 10th green for a five set the tone for the final holes and a tap-in for bogey on the 18th was not quite the dashing end to his amateur days Sherry would have wished for. At least, he was still allowed the luxury of laughing at his fate, for all his disappointment. His purse is no lighter than it was on Thursday morning. He has no children waiting at home to be fed, no mortgage to pay, nobody depending on him to hit fairways and sink putts.

The only unfulfilled expectations will be his own.

For the second day, Sherry was paired with Fred Couples, which is unusual. In contrast to the other majors, the Masters reverts to pairings by scoring order on the second day not the third. So players rarely have the same partner twice. But the former Masters champion had matched Sherry bogey for bogey in the first round and stayed in his company for the second. They made an odd couple. Sherry, 21 and 6ft 8in, with a shambolic gait and a ready smile; Couples, nine inches shorter and 15 years older, ever neat, elegant and nonchalant. You can never tell whether Couples is winning or losing. He seems to be whistling either way.

Two days trying to unravel Augusta gave the pair a common bond, like fellow puzzlers despairing over a 2,000-piece jigsaw. Sherry doffed his cap and bowed when Couples chipped in for a much-needed birdie on the 3rd, and Couples told Sherry he would do fine in his new career.

Sherry's new life starts at Bergamo in the Italian Open next month. In the meantime, he will return to Stirling University to rest, complete the formalities of his course in bio-chemistry and, most probably, put his signature to one of a number of contracts earned by his exploits over the past year. In practical terms, turning professional involves nothing more complicated than announcing the fact to himself this morning and paying a £2,000 fee to the Euro-



Sherry tees off at the 2nd in his improved second round at Augusta yesterday, but the Scot still missed the cut

pean Tour for affiliate membership. Then it is up to him. Sponsors will invite him to tournaments, a maximum of seven in the year, and Sherry will need to make about £50,000 from them to win his players' card automatically for next year.

If not, he will have to qualify through the tour school, an ignominy which will make two sunny days in Augusta seem no more than a hazy dream. Actually playing like a pro, thinking like a pro, turning the golf course from a playpen into an office, a pastime into a business, will involve rather more than even Sherry might have anticipated. There will be many days

when the routine does not encourage a smile or a joke nor the sort of mollycoddling he has enjoyed in Augusta. "I'll definitely be back, though whether it will be next year or not, I don't know," he said. "The Italian Open is the most important tournament for me this year — I still haven't earned anything yet."

Harrow suffer surprise defeat

BY MEL WEBB

THE Halford Hewitt Cup is one of those golf competitions that the cynical might call anachronistic, out of date. In short, a bit of a sporting dinosaur. Those who care about the traditions of the game would say something quite different, and they would be right.

The Halford Hewitt, run by the Public Schools' Golfing Society, is a foursomes matchplay event that has been played at this time of year since 1924, apart from the period between 1940 and 1946, when the British were engaged in another matchplay event — winner takes all.

It is probably the biggest event of its kind anywhere, and seems to imbue all who play in it with the intention, come hell or high water, to keep coming back for more. It is cosy, certainly, a touch incestuous even, but to experience its uniquely clubbable atmosphere is to understand its powers of attraction.

More often than not, the event clashes with another small golfing occasion on the other side of the Atlantic. No matter what is going on in Augusta, however, the Halford Hewitt is not, its players and organisers insist, a moveable feast.

The event is held, for the first two days at least, at Royal St George's in Sandwich and Royal Cinque Ports down the road at Deal, the latter of which hosts the final two days.

The weather in this part of Kent at this time of year is not noted for its even temper, but that does not put off the old boys of the nation's public schools. It was at educational establishments such as these that the stiff upper lip was invented.

The second round of the competition, yesterday, brought one small surprise when Charterhouse defeated Harrow, the 1995 champions. 3-2. It is not that Charterhouse are unused to success in this competition — they have won it 14 times — but it was the first time that they have beaten their old rivals since the war. No matter what happens now, Charterhouse have already carved the notch in their bow that they prize above all others.

Garcia's goals put gloss on victory

FROM SYDNEY FRISKIN IN ATLANTA

GREAT Britain could reflect on a job well done yesterday after opening their campaign in the six nations' hockey tournament here with a 5-2 defeat of the United States. They had made a winning start to what will be a demanding tournament and survived the challenges posed by the practice pitch at the Clarke University stadium.

With the stadium's main pitch still undergoing final preparations, the practice pitch staged the event's opening three matches and Britain had the benefit of watching Pakistan beat Argentina 4-1 and India score three goals without reply against South Korea before taking the field themselves. Indeed, Mansoor-ul-Hassan, the Pakistan coach, complained that the pitch had not been properly watered, the surface was bumpy and that ball control was difficult, leaving the British in no doubt about the conditions they were to face.

The skill level of Britain's match against the United States was consequently low, but a cat-and-mouse affair ended in a decisive victory. By half-time, Britain had established a 1-0 lead, through Robert Thompson, but that was cancelled out four minutes into the second half by Amar. Further misfortune was to follow with Garcia putting a penalty stroke against a post. However, Thompson restored the lead and Giles, showing personal relish, converted a short corner to make it 3-1. The advantage was suddenly cut by a well-taken goal from El Maghraby, a former Egypt international, before Garcia wrapped things up with two late goals.

With luck, Britain should play their next match today against Pakistan on a newly-laid artificial turf main pitch, on which the contractors have been working flat out over the past couple of days. Although Shahbaz Ahmed, the renowned Pakistan captain, is not with the team because of domestic problems, the ease with which Pakistan scored four goals in the second half should be a grim reminder of their potential.

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL

PARIS: European club championships. Third-place playoff: CSKA Moscow 74 Real Madrid 73. Final: Panathinaikos 87 Barcelona 66.

CRICKET

SHARJAH: United Arab Emirates. Sharjah Cup (50 overs). Pakistan 271-6 (Sarfraz 106), India 233 (N Mongia 69). Pakistan beat India by 38 runs.

BRUSSELS: European club indoor tournament. Brussels 52, Wellington 53-1; Wellington 108-4, Huzaripart 72; Taro 177-1, Germany 65-8; Huzaripart 169-4 (N Chead 40), Antwerp 21 all out; Antwerp 70, Taro 71-4; Final (under-18): Taro 210, Antwerp 52. Final (under-15): Wellington 141-9 (D Cox 58), Huzaripart 134-9 (N Chead 50) not out.

TOUR MATCH: West of England Schools Under-15 108-8, Tinsford Under-17 111-2.

CYCLING

BASQUE TOUR: (108km. Vitoria to Lucumbini). 1. F. Frassin (It) 3h 10min 57sec; 2. L. Janssen (Fr); 3. D. Hebebrand (It); 4. M. van Bakken (Hol); 5. P. Herve (Fr); 6. M. Serrano (Sp) all same time. Overall: 1. D. Hebebrand (It) 18h 25min 02sec; 2. P. Herve (Fr) same time; 3. L. Janssen (Fr) 17h 57.

FOOTBALL

PONTIS: Central League. First division: Nottingham Forest 1, Leeds United 1.

1. Wolverhampton 1, Tottenham 2. Second division: Bradford 2, Sunderland 2.

AVON VALLEY LEAGUE: Premier division: 1. Newton Abbot 2, Stroud 2, Stroud 2, Stroud 2.

UNION LEAGUE: Premier division: 1. Newton Abbot 2, Stroud 2, Stroud 2, Stroud 2.

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2. Wolverhampton 1, Tottenham 2.

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3. Wolverhampton 1, Tottenham 2.

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4. Wolverhampton 1, Tottenham 2.

AVON VALLEY LEAGUE: Premier division: 1. Newton Abbot 2, Stroud 2, Stroud 2, Stroud 2.

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5. Wolverhampton 1, Tottenham 2.

AVON VALLEY LEAGUE: Premier division: 1. Newton Abbot 2, Stroud 2, Stroud 2, Stroud 2.

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Gosden frustrated by lack of options for graduates

By JULIAN MUSCAT

IN BYGONE seasons, punters anxious to identify the best three-year-olds could assume that maiden winners graduating to group company for their second outing offered as fertile a source as any.

Indeed, eye-brows would be raised when prominent trainers campaigned their horses in this way. It was a tell-tale sign: a clear statement that there was a horse of enormous potential. However, major surgery to the Flat programme has rendered such thinking redundant.

A deliberate shortage of conditions races leaves trainers with little option but to tilt at a classic trial. Yet many punters have been slow to react. To them, a two-year-old maiden winner reappearing in the Craven Stakes — as will Pommar d on Thursday — is a horse to conjure with.

Of course, Pommar d must have shown encouragement for his trainer to entertain the idea. But John Gosden is a reluctant participant. He will saddle the horse almost by default. "I have been hunting through the programme book

for a suitable race over seven furlongs or a mile for Pommar d," Gosden said.

"With the exception of the Thirsk Classic Trial, there was nothing at all between the one at Doncaster on March 23 and another at Sandown on April 26. Horses like Pommar d are forced to start off in the trials so that the fields have depth. Personally, I don't think that is

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: Direct Route
(2.35 Ascot)
Next best: Sheriffmuir
(2.00 Newton Abbot)

good planning for the horse but I have no choice."

Gosden's pre-race pronouncements have long resounded with punters. He is not averse to declare his horse in need of a race, or unsuited to the prevailing ground. All of which makes you wonder how Pommar d has come to plummert in the 2,000 Guineas ante-post market. "Sure, he is a nice colt in the making," the trainer said, "but if there was another

option he would not be running in the Craven Stakes. He has not done much work and is totally unproven."

In this respect Gosden's dilemma is exacerbated many times over. If the likes of Maiden Castle, Santillana, Kerry Ring and Sacho are similarly unproven, that has not stopped them being advanced as classic candidates ahead of proven juveniles like Lord Of Men.

Their lustre lies entirely in their potential, an addictive drug to those willing away the weeks before Newmarket's Craven meeting.

Gosden's string approaches the fixture three weeks behind schedule. "The spring has not been kind to any of us," he said. "Most of my horses will benefit from their first race more than usual. Full marks to anyone who has their horses 100 per cent fit at this stage but mine are just not ready."

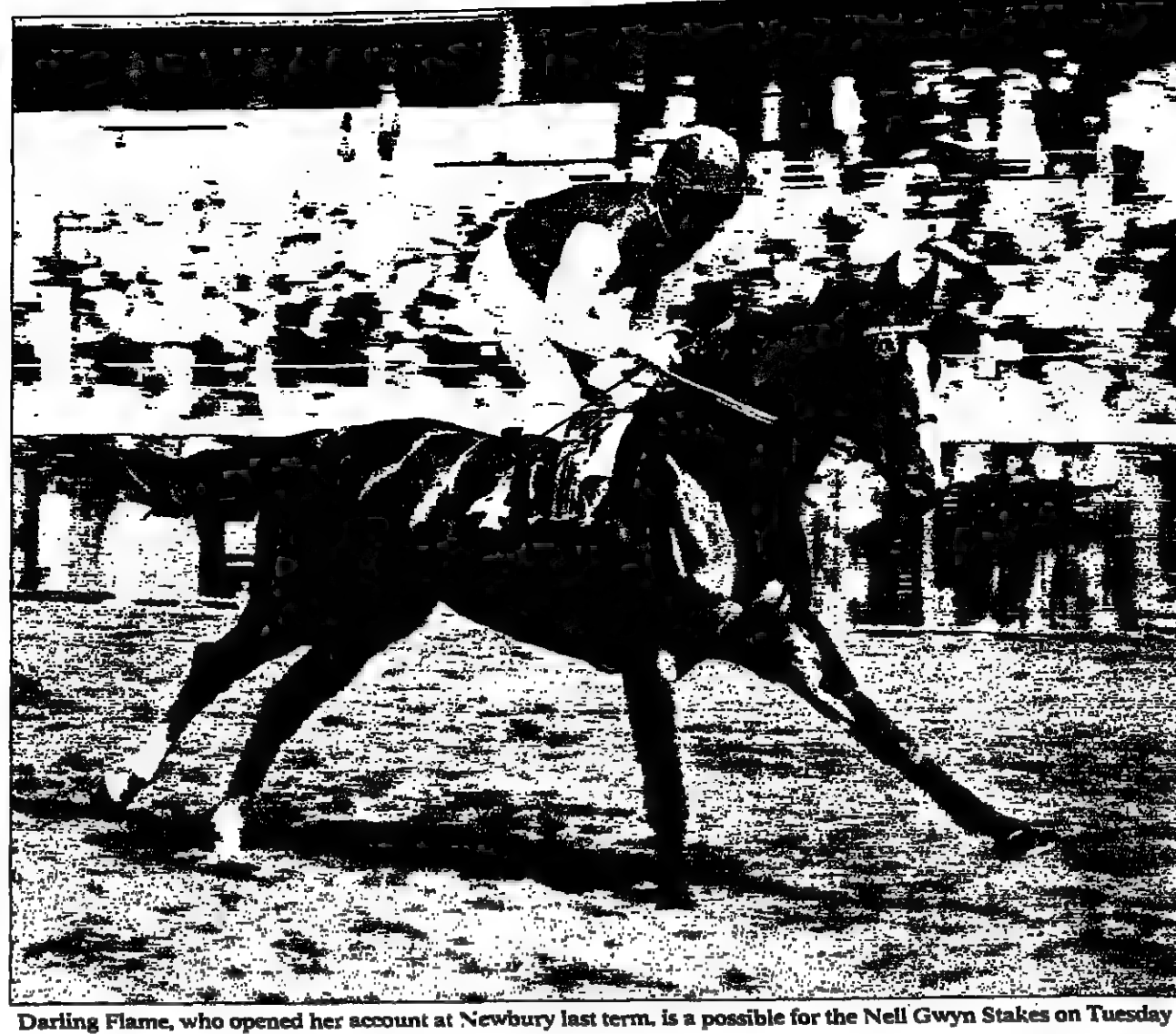
This was apparent on Easter Monday, when Gosden dispatched four runners to Kempton Park. Atlantic Storm, River Captain, Inquisitor and Voodoo Rocket were all prominent in the betting;

they finished seventh, twelfth, sixth and ninth respectively. And the muscle injury sustained by Lord Of Men has hampered his preparation for the Poule d'Essai des Poulains (French 2,000 Guineas) next month.

Sacho, a son of Sadler's Wells and Oh So Sharp, has suffered a minor interruption to his training but is to reappear in maiden company, either at Newmarket or Newbury. Sacho appeals as a genuine Derby prospect but he does not appreciate a fast surface. Should he make it to Epsom, dry ground would surely compromise him.

Another possible classic candidate, Darling Flame, may contest the Nell Gwyn Stakes on Tuesday if she works satisfactorily today. Kerry Ring and Maiden Castle — the latter described as still on the weak side — are also due to run next week.

But followers of the stable should not expect too much until the weather relents. If you are heading for the Craven meeting, the message from Gosden is clear. Pack your thermals instead of your wallet.



Darling Flame, who opened her account at Newbury last term, is a possible for the Nell Gwyn Stakes on Tuesday

Signs point to Direct Route

ASCOT
BBC1

2.00: This appears to be a match between the two top weights. More rain would favour Call It A Day, whose best form has been with some give in the ground, while Senior El Beiruti favours a faster surface. The pair met at Wetherby behind Mr Mulligan in January, when the selection finished second. Senior El Beiruti was pulled up that day over a trip which was almost certainly too far and disappeared at Aintree 10 days ago.

2.35: It is rare for official British Horse Racing Board assessors to let in novices lightly for their handicap debut, but I believe Direct Route has been allotted considerably less weight than he is entitled to carry given his progressive form.

Howard Johnson's five-year-old, who was an above-average bumper horse, won his first two starts over hurdles in striking fashion and only just failed in peg back his half-brother, Penny A Day, in a valuable race at Kelso six weeks ago. He looks thrown in here and well worth a bet.

Non Vintage, a course and



TODAY'S RACES ON TELEVISION

distance winner, goes well in big fields, on right-handed courses and looks the main danger.

3.10: Staunton Friend, eighth to Collier Bay in the Champion Hurdle, tries this trip for the first time but would enter calculations if there is sufficient overnight rain. Silver Wedge finished fifth in the Stayers' Hurdle and will be thereabouts, although he is far from an easy ride.

Preference is for the Robert Alder-trained Gilliam Cove, who followed up his second to Seekin Cash over this course and distance in February with a neck defeat, running on strongly, by Great Easby in the Gold Card Final at the Cheltenham Festival last month.

RICHARD EVANS

ASCOT

2.00 Call It A Day
2.35 Direct Route
3.10 Silver Wedge

The Times Private Handicapper's top rating:

4.15 SPARKLING YASMIN

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM TOTE JACKPOT MEETING SIS

2.00 KESTREL NOVICES CHASE (25.50 2m 311yds) (4 runners) BBC1

101 54-1212 CALL IT A DAY 5 (6.5) M. J. L. (10) 11-12-13-14-15-16-17-18-19-20-21-22-23-24-25-26-27-28-29-30-31-32-33-34-35-36-37-38-39-40-41-42-43-44-45-46-47-48-49-50-51-52-53-54-55-56-57-58-59-60-61-62-63-64-65-66-67-68-69-70-71-72-73-74-75-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-94-95-96-97-98-99-100-101-102-103-104-105-106-107-108-109-110-111-112-113-114-115-116-117-118-119-120-121-122-123-124-125-126-127-128-129-130-131-132-133-134-135-136-137-138-139-140-141-142-143-144-145-146-147-148-149-150-151-152-153-154-155-156-157-158-159-160-161-162-163-164-165-166-167-168-169-170-171-172-173-174-175-176-177-178-179-180-181-182-183-184-185-186-187-188-189-190-191-192-193-194-195-196-197-198-199-200-201-202-203-204-205-206-207-208-209-210-211-212-213-214-215-216-217-218-219-220-221-222-223-224-225-226-227-228-229-230-231-232-233-234-235-236-237-238-239-240-241-242-243-244-245-246-247-248-249-250-251-252-253-254-255-256-257-258-259-260-261-262-263-264-265-266-267-268-269-270-271-272-273-274-275-276-277-278-279-280-281-282-283-284-285-286-287-288-289-290-291-292-293-294-295-296-297-298-299-300-301-302-303-304-305-306-307-308-309-310-311-312-313-314-315-316-317-318-319-320-321-322-323-324-325-326-327-328-329-330-331-332-333-334-335-336-337-338-339-340-341-342-343-344-345-346-347-348-349-350-351-352-353-354-355-356-357-358-359-360-361-362-363-364-365-366-367-368-369-370-371-372-373-374-375-376-377-378-379-380-381-382-383-384-385-386-387-388-389-390-391-392-393-394-395-396-397-398-399-400-401-402-403-404-405-406-407-408-409-410-411-412-413-414-415-416-417-418-419-420-421-422-423-424-425-426-427-428-429-430-431-432-433-434-435-436-437-438-439-440-441-442-443-444-445-446-447-448-449-450-451-452-453-454-455-456-457-458-459-460-461-462-463-464-465-466-467-468-469-470-471-472-473-474-475-476-477-478-479-480-481-482-483-484-485-486-487-488-489-490-491-492-493-494-495-496-497-498-499-500-501-502-503-504-505-506-507-508-509-510-511-512-513-514-515-516-517-518-519-520-521-522-523-524-525-526-527-528-529-530-531-532-533-534-535-536-537-538-539-540-541-542-543-544-545-546-547-548-549-550-551-552-553-554-555-556-557-558-559-560-561-562-563-564-565-566-567-568-569-570-571-572-573-574-575-576-577-578-579-580-581-582-583-584-585-586-587-588-589-590-591-592-593-594-595-596-597-598-599-600-601-602-603-604-605-606-607-608-609-610-611-612-613-614-615-616-617-618-619-620-621-622-623-624-625-626-627-628-629-630-631-632-633-634-635-636-637-638-639-640-641-642-643-644-645-646-647-648-649-650-651-652-653-654-655-656-657-658-659-660-661-662-663-664-665-666-667-668-669-670-671-672-673-674-675-676-677-678-679-680-681-682-683-684-685-686-687-688-689-690-691-692-693-694-695-696-697-698-699-700-701-702-703-704-705-706-707-708-709-710-711-712-713-714-715-716-717-718-719-720-721-722-723-724-725-726-727-728-729-730-731-732-733-734-735-736-737-738-739-740-741-742-743-744-745-746-747-748-749-750-751-752-753-754-755-756-757-758-759-760-761-762-763-764-765-766-767-768-769-770-771-772-773-774-775-776-777-778-779-780-781-782-783-784-785-786-787-788-789-790-791-792-793-794-795-796-797-798-799-800-801-802-803-804-805-806-807-808-809-810-811-812-813-814-815-816-817-818-819-820-821-822-823-824-825-826-827-828-829-830-831-832-833-834-835-836-837-838-839-840-841-842-843-844-845-846-847-848-849-850-851-852-853-854-855-856-857-858-859-860-861-862-863-864-865-866-867-868-869-870-871-872-873-874-875-876-877-878-879-880-881-882-883-884-885-886-887-888-889-890-891-892-893-894-895-896-897-898-899-900-901-902-903-904-905-906-907-908-909-910-911-912-913-914-915-916-917-918-919-920-921-922-923-924-925-926-927-928-929-930-931-932-933-934-935-936-937-938-939-940-941-942-943-944-945-946-947-948-949-950-951-952-953-954-955-956-957-958-959-960-961-962-963-964-965-966-967-968-969-970-971-972-973-974-975-976-977-978-979-980-981-982-983-984-985-986-987-988-989-990-991-992-993-994-995-996-997-998-999-1000-1001-1002-1003-1004-1005-1006-1007-1008-1009-1010-1011-1012-1013-1014-1015-1016-1017-1018-1019-1020-1021-1022-1023-1024-1025-1026-1027-1028-1029-1030-1031-1032-1033-1034-1035-1036-1037-1038-1039-1040-1041-1042-1043-1044-1045-1046-1047-1048-1049-1050-1051-1052-1053-1054-1055-1056-1057-1058-1059-1060-1061-1062-1063-1064-1065-1066-1067-1068-1069-1070-1071-1072-1073-1074-1075-1076-1077-1078-1079-1080-1081-1082-1083-1084-1085-1086-1087-1088-1089-1090-1091-1092-1093-1094-1095-1096-1097-1098-1099-1100-1101-1102-1103-1104-1105-1106-1107-1108-1109-1110-1111-1112-1113-1114-1115-1116-1117-1118-1119-1120-1121-1122-1123-1124-1125-1126-1127-1128-1129-1130-1131-1132-1133-1134-1135-1136-1137-1138-1139-1140-1141-1142-1143-1144-1145-1146-1147-1148-1149-1150-1151-1152-1153-1154-1155-1156-1157-1158-1159-1160-1161-1162-1163-1164-1165-1166-1167-1168-1169-1170-1171-1172-1173-1174-1175-1176-1177-1178-1179-1180-1181-1182-1183-1184-1185-1186-1187-1188-1189-1190-1191-1192-1193-1194-1195-1196-1197-1198-1199-1200-1201-1202-1203-1204-1205-1206-1207-1208-1209-1210-1211-1212-1213-1214-1215-1216-1217-1218-1219-1220-1221-1222-1223-1224-1225-122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Saturday portrait: Ray Wilkins, by Oliver Holt

Cultured ambassador with vision to pass anything but the buck

It was hard having Ray Wilkins as your hero in the early 1980s. Bryan Robson worshippers boxed you in on every side at Old Trafford, pounding away at you with the same relentlessness as their idol's surging runs and thumping headers, ridiculing Wilkins's more cerebral approach, ignoring his vision, his elegance and his touch, and grinding you down by growling every time that he played a ball square.

Pretty soon, someone had nicknamed him "The Crab", because he went sideways so often, and Tommy Docherty, who made a career out of being an ex-Manchester United manager, jumped on the bandwagon and slapped on a bit of fresh paint. "He can't run, he can't tackle and he can't head the ball," Docherty said. "How can people call him a world-class player? The only time he goes forward is to toss the coin."

The angst reached its apogee late in 1982, when Wilkins shattered his cheekbone in the twelfth minute of a 2-2 Milk Cup draw between United and Bournemouth at Dean Court. By the time that he was fit again, he had lost the captaincy of club and country to Robson, and found Rudi Voser occupying his central midfield role at Old Trafford. It took him a long time to fight his way back in.

Those days seem a long, long way away now, as Ray Wilkins, player-manager of Queens Park Rangers, prepares for the game against Coventry City, his relegation rivals, at Highfield Road today that could seal his club's demotion to the Endleigh Insurance League or secure their place in the FA Carling Premiership. They seem distant, those days, and yet, as Wilkins squares up to adversity again, the memories are particularly pertinent.

In the interim, you see, the period between leaving United for AC Milan in a £1.5 million deal in 1984 and the time, earlier this season, when things started to go wrong at Loftus Road, Wilkins came steadily back into fashion. His label suddenly changed from "The Crab" to "cultured midfielder", a refreshing change from the archetypal up-and-at-'em

brawler so beloved of the English game. Things went well in Italy and, later, in Glasgow with Rangers, and, by the time that he started playing for Queens Park Rangers, in 1989, he was being held up as a paragon of footballing virtue. So, by the time that he became manager at Loftus Road, 18 months ago, people had got used to seeing Wilkins as a gentle man, easing along on the crest of his talent.

He was unfailingly courteous and polite, an articulate, pithy, television pundit, part of Terry Venables's England revolution as coach to the under-21 team, a credit to the game in every way. They got used to this image, they saw the results going badly at Queens Park Rangers and said that he was

'A lot of people who have no affinity with Queens Park Rangers will be rooting for them this afternoon'

just "too nice" to succeed as a manager. They forgot about those days at Manchester United.

Ron Atkinson has not forgotten, though. He inherited Wilkins when he took over at Old Trafford in 1981 and fate has hurled them back together. Atkinson, who denies that it was he who dubbed Wilkins "The Crab", is the Coventry manager. His voice sounded tight with tension on the telephone yesterday. He knows that the man who was once his captain and is now his opponent is no soft touch.

"The first game I was in charge at United, we were playing Nottingham Forest," he said. "The lad did not have the best of games that day but he went in my estimation. Things weren't coming off for him and the fans started to give him a bit of a dig, but he kept looking for the ball more and more and more."

"The less effective he was, the more he wanted the ball. He had

bottle even when things were not going well. He has got a hard side to him. If somebody does not do something he wants them to, I would imagine they would find out about it fairly quickly."

Wilkins has adopted the same approach as a manager. The worse things have got, the more he has stood up and beckoned the blame towards himself. He has admitted that he has made bad buys with the £5 million from the sale of Les Ferdinand, Ned Zelic and Simon Osborn have come and gone without making an impression, Mark Hateley has been dogged by injury. Wilkins himself has played in the past two games and looked a class above the rest, but he draws the line at passing the buck.

Even when his team were denied two vital extra points last month when Eric Cantona scored an equaliser for United deep into injury time at Loftus Road, Wilkins refused to gripe. He entered the press room afterwards all smiles, where many managers would not have turned up at all, answered all the questions with good humour and left.

Through it all, though, he has never doubted his own ability. "I have got this thing," he said yesterday, "that, if you once start doubting yourself, there are so many people out there who are going to doubt you anyway that you will not have a prayer. I firmly believe in what I have done and that belief has been very important to me. Even in the bad times, you learn something from them and from the people around you."

Wilkins, who will be 40 in September, began his career at Chelsea in 1973, labelling under the nickname, Butch, which was bestowed on him by his father, also a professional footballer. Butch Wilkins was 18 when Chelsea made him their youngest-ever captain and Don Revie took him on an England tour of South America, where he played alongside man like Mick Channon.

United paid £825,000 for him in 1979. He scored a spectacular goal in the 3-2 FA Cup Final draw with Brighton and Hove Albion in 1983 and then, as all Manchester feared



ILLUSTRATION BY STEVE MARTIN

that Robson would leave for Italy, Wilkins was sold instead. AC Milan paid £1.5 million for him, making him the most expensive English player to move abroad.

The Mexico World Cup in 1986 was a truncated failure. Four minutes after Robson had been led away from the group game against Morocco in Monterrey with a dislocated shoulder, Wilkins was sent off for throwing the ball at the referee. The first time an England

player had been dismissed in a World Cup final match.

He left AC Milan in 1987 and, after a brief spell at Paris Saint-Germain, arrived in Scotland to join Rangers before returning to England. Italy had honed his passing skills even more, made his awareness even greater and, at last, he was accorded the respect that he deserved. His critics melted quietly into the background and everyone was an admirer.

"It is strange the way things have turned," Wilkins said. "I used to get criticised for playing square balls and yet you watch games like Liverpool and Newcastle the other night, and people are talking about how they strung 25 passes together before this goal or that goal. Now 15 of those will have gone sideways and backwards, but they have kept the ball and that has always been my philosophy."

He must have been doing something right. He won 84 caps for England (only five men have won more since the Second World War) and was appointed MBE. He is respected by press, public and peers alike. A lot of people who have absolutely no affinity with Queens Park Rangers will be rooting for them this afternoon. It is still hard having Wilkins as a hero, but he is now just as worthy of our admiration as ever he was.

THE TIMES MATCH-BY-MATCH GUIDE TO THE PREMIERSHIP THIS WEEKEND

LEEDS UNITED v ASTON VILLA

Long faces at Stamford Bridge, where Chelsea have not won for more than two months, and even longer faces at Elland Road, where a Leeds victory would be a relief, but a Leeds defeat would be a disaster. Public vilification is part of any football environment, but Wilkins' treatment seems particularly harsh, even if he should perhaps lighten up a shade. Probably more doom and gloom at the Bridge today. Woe, woe...

LAST SEASON: Chelsea 0 Leeds United 3
TEN-YEAR RECORD: 2-2, 2-1, 1-0, 1-0, 1-1, 0-2

CHIEF LEAS (from): M. Hinchcock, M. Duffery, D. Lee, A. Myers, D. Patterson, D. Wier, R. Gull, J. Spencer, S. Minto, M. Hughes, P. Furlong, C. Surley, E. Johnson, G. Peacock, D. Morrison.

LEEDS UNITED (from): J. Lukic, L. Redondo, D. Wetherall, C. Palmer, G. Kelly, A. Gray, J. Burt, G. McAllister, G. Speed, S. Desnae, T. Brollin, I. Harte, N. Worthington, J. Penberthy, M. Jackson, M. Beatty.

COVENTRY CITY v QUEENS PARK RANGERS

Impossible to overstate the importance of this game, definitely one of those up in the air, a matter of life or death. For the winners, a chance to salvage the season, the pill backbones, a draw, and they could both be knocked out. Rangers must be pleased, with only one defeat in five matches, but Coventry's bulging split should not be underestimated. Show has almost recovered from a fractured cheekbone but will probably play in a protective mask and should be OK as long as he avoids laughing.

LAST SEASON: Coventry 0 Queens Park Rangers 1
TEN-YEAR RECORD: 2-1, 4-1, 0-0, 0-3, 1-1, 2-1, 2-2, 0-1, 0-1, 0-1

COVENTRY CITY (from): S. Ogrizovic, A. Pickering, M. Hall, L. Dean, R. Shaw, D. Harris, P. Williams, K. Richardson, P. Teller, W. Boland, E. Lee, D. Dublin, N. Whelan, P. Nollan, J. Salako, G. Strachan, J. Flann.

QUEENS PARK RANGERS (from): J. Sommer, D. Beresford, S. Yates, A. McDonald, R. Brevet, A. Ince, J. Holloway, T. Sinclair, S. Barker, K. Gallen, D. Dicks, G. Goodridge, M. Brazier, M. Halsey, A. Roberts.

MANCHESTER CITY v SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY

City have peaked to perfection, only one win in ten matches, and the relegation dogfight reaches a frenzy. The voice of Alan Ball, beleaguered City boss, seems to be rising an octave a minute, upsetting most of the local canine population, and the smugness from neighbouring Old Trafford is almost unbearable. Wednesday plod on, having narrowly averted the danger, and could prove easy pickings were not City so clueless. At least David Platt, win or lose, usually manages to retain a sensible, dignified stance.

LAST SEASON: Manchester City 3 Sheffield Wednesday 2
TEN-YEAR RECORD: 1-3, 1-0, 0-1, 1-2, 1-0, 2-2

MANCHESTER CITY (from): E. Innes, M. Frontczak, K. Symons, K. Curle, J. Brightwell, G. Harkins, N. Clough, S. Lomas, N. Dutton, U. Rosier, M. Kavelashvili, M. Brown, M. Phillips, A. Karmachian, M. Margeson.

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (from): K. Pressman, P. Atherton, L. Briscoe, D. Walker, J. Newsome, R. Binkley, M. Pennington, J. Sheridan, M. Duggan, S. Whittingham, D. Hest, D. Kovacic, C. Donaldson, C. Waddle, S. Nicol.

MIDDLESBROUGH v WIMBLEDON

Middlesbrough are on a roll. After enduring a 13-match sequence without a victory, they have now racked up a five-game unbeaten run, even if Jimmy and Branko, their exceptionally well-oiled strikers, are not exactly exhibiting too much South American flair at the moment. Wimbledon are almost safe from the curse of Endleigh and should still be around to anticipate anyone and everyone next season. Good job, too; the Premiership just would not be the same without Joe Kinnear's Seahurst Park striders.

LAST SEASON: No fixture
TEN-YEAR RECORD: 1-0, 1-0, 1-0, 2-0, 2-0

MIDDLESBROUGH (from): A. Miller, N. Cox, N. Pearson, S. Vickers, P. Whelan, C. Fleming, Branko, G. Kavanagh, C. Hignett, J. Pollack, Juninho, N. Barnhill, C. Freston, A. Campbell, A. Moore.

WIMBLEDON (from): M. Sullivan, K. Cunningham, A. Kimble, C. Perry, N. Ardley, A. Pearce, A. Reeves, R. Earle, V. Jones, E. Ekoku, D. Holdsworth, A. Clarke, J. Goodman, J. Ewell, M. Gayle, S. Castledine, P. Fear, M. Harford.

NOTTINGHAM FOREST v BLACKBURN

Forest finished last season with a surge, nine wins from 13 matches giving them third place and a UEFA Cup berth. It is happening again, with four victories from their past six outings, and they are closing all-important fifth position, which should guarantee a ticket to Europe. Blackburn's only foreign travel next season will be if they enter the club band, Dalglish and the incomprehensible Mumbblings, in the European Long Contest. If only people could understand his lyrics.

LAST SEASON: Nottingham Forest 0 Blackburn Rovers 2
TEN-YEAR RECORD: 2-2, 2-1, 1-0, 1-3, 0-2

NOTTINGHAM FOREST (from): M. Crossley, A. Hauland, D. Lytle, S. Peters, C. Cooper, S. Chettle, S. Stone, C. Bert-Williams, S. Gerrard, I. Wain, K. Campbell, J. Lee, B. Roy, P. McGregor, S. Howe, D. Phillips, A. Warner.

BLACKBURN (from): T. Flowers, H. Berg, C. Coleman, C. Hendry, J. Karra, T. Sherwood, S. Ripley, J. Wilson, A. Shearer, M. Newell, G. Fenton, K. Gallacher, G. Croft, W. McInerney, M. Holmes, N. Marley.

SOUTHAMPTON v MANCHESTER UNITED

Chalk and cheese confrontation at The Dell, with Southampton fast disappearing down the Premiership plughole and United pressing themselves at the top. Dave Merrington, Southampton's Georgia manager, would love to do Newcastle's honour, as would like of the Saints players who have Tyrone's connections. Main problem for Merrington is whether to retain economic Grobbelaar in goal or bring back the marginally more reliable Beasant. Either way, United look much too strong to slip up here.

LAST SEASON: Southampton 2 Manchester United 2
TEN-YEAR RECORD: 1-0, 1-1, 2-2, 0-2, 0-1, 0-1, 1-3, 2-2

SOUTHAMPTON (from): B. Grobbelaar, D. Beasant, J. Dool, A. Neilson, S. Charlton, K. Monkou, R. Hall, B. Vernon, J. McGarry, M. Lee, T. Taylor, W. Hodge, N. Shipperley, M. Heaney, G. Watson, C. Warren, P. Tisdale.

MANCHESTER UNITED (from): P. Schmeissel, P. Neville, D. Irwin, S. Bruce, D. May, S. Neville, D. Beardsley, R. Keane, N. Butt, L. Sharpe, R. Giggs, E. Cantona, A. Cole, B. McClair, P. Scholes, P. Parker, A. Cotton.

WEST HAM v BOLTON

Five wins in nine matches have given Bolton a sniff of a chance of avoiding the drop, when previously there was none. Another three-pointers, against a side who have long since preserved their Premier status, and Colin Todd's brave bolters could be on the brink of one of the greatest escapes in the history of greatest escapes. Little to motivate West Ham, though, and they should perhaps now realise that there is more to English football than posing apertly, fancy flicks and rolled-down socks.

LAST SEASON: No fixture
TEN-YEAR RECORD: No fixture

WEST HAM UNITED (from): L. Mioduski, T. Brackley, J. Dicks, S. Bile, M. Riley, J. Bishop, M. Hughes, P. Slater, D. Williamson, K. Rowland, I. Dowie, A. Cotes, D. J. Morris, L. Sealey, A. Martin.

BOLTON (from): G. Ward, J. Phillips, G. Bergeson, S. Currie, C. Fairclough, S. Coleman, A. Thompson, S. Sellers, A. Stubbs, J. McGinley, M. Blake, M. Paalsten, S. Green, S. Taylor, F. de Freitas, A. Davison.

NEWCASTLE v ASTON VILLA

Judging by the despair-will large on the faces of many Newcastle supporters at Wood Park on Monday night, after their heroes had been beaten 2-1 by Blackburn, the Premiership pennant is all but heading for Old Trafford. Never have so many looked so suicidal; rarely can there have been such a pitiful sight in reaction to sporting defeat. They will be back at St James' Park tomorrow, full of hope, but Villa are not ideal opponents to have as visitors when victory is vital. Sadly, it could all end in tears. Again.

LAST SEASON: Newcastle United 3 Aston Villa 1
TEN-YEAR RECORD: 2-2, 2-1, 1-0, 1-1, 3-1

NEWCASTLE UNITED (from): S. Hirdop, G. Watson, J. Beresford, D. Peacock, P. Albert, P. Lee, D. Batty, P. Beardsley, D. Givon, P. Aspinall, K. Gillespie, L. Clark, W. Barton, R. Elliott, P. Kitson.

ASTON VILLA (from): M. Bogach, G. Charles, A. Wright, P. McGrath, I. Taylor, U. Ehiogu, M. Cooper, A. Townsend, J. Johnson, D. Yorke, S. Milsom, S. Suter (from): M. Oakes, J. Jochim, L. Hendrie, S. Sturton, R. Scholes.

NEW WEEK'S FIXTURES

Everton v Liverpool (8.0)

Aston Villa v West Ham (7.45)

Blackburn v Wimbledon (7.45)

Manchester United v Leeds (8.0)

Newcastle v Southampton (7.45)

Nottingham Forest v Coventry (7.45)

Sheffield Wednesday v Chelsea (7.45)

HOW THEY STAND

	P	Pts	Goal diff	Recent form
1 Manchester Utd	34	73	+31	DWWWW
2 Newcastle	33	67	+25	WLWLW
3 Liverpool	34	65	+35	WLWLW
4 Aston Villa	34	62	+20	WLWWW
5 Arsenal	34	57	+16	WLWLW
6 Tottenham	34	55	+10	WLWLD
7 Everton	35	54	+16	DLWWL
8 Nottingham	34	53	+2	DWLWW
9 Blackburn	34	51	+8	WWLWL
10 West Ham	34	46	-7	WLWDL
11 Chelsea	34	45	0	DLDL
12 Middlesbrough	35	43	-10	DWWDW
13 Leeds	33	42	-10	DLWLW
14 Sheffield Wed	34	38	-9	WWLWL
15 Wimbledon	34	37	-13	LWWDL
16 Southampton	34	31	-14	WLWLW
17 Manchester City	35	31	-27	WLWLL
18 QPR	35	30	-18	DWLWL
19 Coventry	34	30	-21	LLWLW
20 Bolton	35	29	-29	WLWLW

ARSENAL v TOTTENHAM

With a possible place in Europe at stake for the victors, north London's twice-a-season outpouring of desire and passion takes on extra significance. Now that Bruce Rioch, argumentative manager, and Ian Wright, argumentative player, have kissed and made up, Arsenal should be all the more formidable. Tottenham, despite slipping into an adventurous headlong charge, day and needing seven stitches in a cut above his right eye, should not survive, it is no more, it is now an ex-headliner.

LAST SEASON: Arsenal 1 Tottenham Hotspur 1
TEN-YEAR RECORD: 0-0, 0-0, 2-1, 2-0, 1-0, 0-0, 2-0

ARSENAL (from): D. Seaman, M. Keown, A. Unsworth, S. Maitland, C. Chilton, P. Merson, N. Winterburn, D. Bergkamp, J. Wright, S. Hodd, S. Burt.

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR (from): I. Walker, D. Austin, J. S. Edwards, G. Mabbott, C. Wilson, R. Fox, A. Sinton, E. Shefferson, C. Armstrong, S. Nethercott, R. Rosenfield, S. Stace, C. Day, D. Howie.

WHEN TO WATCH ON TELEVISION

10.45pm BBC 1 Match of the Day (Highlights)

12.00 noon Sky Sports Goals on Sunday

3.30pm Sky Sports Ford Escort Super Sunday: Newcastle v Aston Villa (live)

7.00pm Sky Sports Ford Escort Monday Night Football: Arsenal v Tottenham (live)

Compiled by Russell Knapton, John Thompson

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SPORT

SATURDAY APRIL 13 1996

Champion fails to defend his Masters title beyond the halfway stage

Crenshaw suffers cruellest cut

FROM JOHN HOPKINS
GOLF CORRESPONDENT
IN AUGUSTA

SAM TORRANCE'S involvement in the sixtieth Masters ended just before lunch here yesterday when he added a much-improved 71 to his first-round 80 for a 36-hole total of 151. Torrance was not alone on this score, seven over par and certain to miss the halfway cut. An hour later came the sad sight of Ben Crenshaw, the defending champion, walking up the 18th to the site of his emotional triumph last year.

Then he finished with a five and he did so again this year. But last year it was good enough to give him a one-stroke victory over Davis Love III, whereas this year all that remained was for him to head to the clubhouse and kick his heels for two days before he could perform the ceremonial role of putting the green jacket on the shoulders of the winner this year and congratulating him in front of millions of television viewers. Crenshaw's rounds were 77 and 74.

"Not to play your best golf here after winning is very, very disappointing," Crenshaw said. "I played some really good holes and some very poor ones. As champion you are expected to do all you can but the ball has got to run for you. I am going to be an innocent bystander for the next couple of days."

Torrance's first round was what did the damage that was ultimately to prevent him playing the last two rounds for the first time in his three appearances in this event. "After that I wanted to go into a corner, have a beer and sulk," Torrance said. "But my dad told me to get out on the practice ground and I am glad I did."

Torrance said the wind was "wicked". It got up overnight to turn a course that Greg Norman and Phil Mickelson had flattened, with a 63 and 65 respectively on Thursday, a day when 32 of the 93 competing golfers broke par, into one that barred its teeth yesterday. The 12th proved a terror. Crenshaw had a six there after a gust of wind got up just as he hit his tee shot and blew it 30 yards left.

The wind made both the par fives on the homeward half much more difficult and even as early as lunchtime it became clear that there would be no rounds containing nine birdies, as Norman's had the previous day. Almost without exception the early finishers reeled off the course grateful to



Lyle tracks the progress of his tee shot at the 4th hole during his second round of 74 in the Masters at Augusta yesterday. Photograph: Stephen Munday/Allsport

SCORES FROM AUGUSTA

United States unless stated, par 72
Early second-round
141: C. Pavin 75 69
145: J. Furyk 75 70, B. Langer (Ger) 75 70,
T. Lehman 75 70
146: P. Couples 78 68, L. Mike 75 71
147: T. Watson 75 72
148: S. Snider 80 69, S. Lyle 75 74
150: N. Lancelotti 76 74, T. Woods 75 75
151: S. Torrance (GB) 80 71, B. Crenshaw
77 74, S. Higashi (Japan) 76 75, E.
Dougherty 78 75, K. Triplett 76 79
152: T. Herron 78 76, K. Perry 75 77, T. Kile
75 77
153: W. Austin 79 74, D. Edwards 79 74, C.
Rocca (It) 79 75, B. Bryant 78 75
154: B. Mayfair 77 77
155: S. Elkington (Aus) 76 79, B.
Hamminger 78 79, G. Sherry (GB) 78 77,
157: I. Baker-Finch (Aus) 78 79

158: C. Wofford 79 79
160: B. Marston 79 81, J. Courville 78 82,
C. Coady 82 78, M. McCumber 78 82
166: D. Ford 61 68
The leading 44 scores and best plus
players within 10 shots of the leader
qualify for the final rounds
First-round
65: G. Morrison (Aus) 65, P. Mickelson 67,
B. Tway 68, S. Hoch 68, L. Janzen 69, D.
Gilford (GB), S. Faxon, N. Faldo (GB),
S. Simpson, V. Smith (Ire), 70: P. Ashner, S.
McCann, R. Floyd, D. Frost (SA), J.
Gallagher Jr., J. Nicklaus, J. Hoss 71, T.
Aron, J. Maggiori, F. Nobile (It), M. Price
(Zim), S. Lowery, B. Gleason, B. Estes, M.
Calcevecchia, J. Huston, F. Funk, J. Daly, C.
Stranger, E. Els (SA), M. Ozaki (Japan), L.
Roberts 72, T. Tye, H. Sutton, D. Waldorf

those distances in two strokes. One shot better off than Woods, but still in danger, was Sandy Lyle, who added a 74 to his 75 in the first round for a five-over par total of 149.

As the day wore on there was no lessening of admiration for Norman's 63. It was one of the great championship rounds, one that he considered to be almost as good as his 63 at Turnberry in the second round of the 1986 Open and his 64 at Royal St George's on the last day of the 1993 Open.

"I'll be able to reflect on this for years to come," Norman said. "Every time I come back here I'll think, 'Boy, you shot 63 here'. You remember when you shot a 63. You don't forget the shots you played and the putts you made." Amid the admiration for Norman's phenomenal burst of six birdies in his last seven holes it might be forgotten how well he played at the start of his

round. "I don't think people realise quite how hard the first five holes are," he said. "When I got through them with some solid golf and some good putts I stood on the 6th tee and said: 'Phew. Now perhaps we can do something.'"

By playing so well, Norman created a problem for himself — living up to his own skills. There have been only four champions who have led from start to finish at this event and the last one was Ray Floyd in 1976. "You have to keep the momentum going somehow," Norman said in the glowing aftermath of his round. "You know you're not going to shoot three more 63s, so you try not to let it get away from you and get too excited about it."

Mickelson's and then Norman's rounds brought the opening day to a crescendo. Days like that are rare at major championships and all the more special for being so.

Sherry departs, page 43

Bishop will attempt to bring clubs and union together

BY DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

BILL BISHOP, president of the Rugby Football Union (RFU) is to play a direct role in negotiations between the union and its leading clubs. But in a fresh twist to an increasingly tangled plot, the International Rugby Football Board (IRFB) yesterday offered its services as a mediator between the warring factions. The RFU's full committee met in London yesterday after deadlock had been reached over the degree of control the union seeks to exercise over the newly professionalised clubs. England's leading 20 clubs want more independence to run their own affairs than their governing body is prepared to give and, on Thursday, announced their withdrawal from next season's RFU competitions.

The entry of Bishop into the fray will bring hope to both sides if it diverts attention from the two personalities who have tended to dominate the public perception of the disagreement: Cliff Brittle, chairman of the RFU executive committee who has led his union's negotiating panel, and Sir John Hall, chairman of Newcastle United Sporting Clubs. Bishop said yesterday: "It's time that I did enter the talks. I was kept away to protect the office of the president. I can add some experience and feel for the game."

Sources suggest that the RFU committee has realised the need for agreement if a split damaging to both sides is to be avoided. Accusations of intransigence have flown thick and fast, but the differences

Gloster spire 42
Debt to Orkney 42

are not so great if the clubs can be granted some measure of graduated independence which will allow them to run their businesses successfully in the new era.

That the clubs are in deadly earnest is illustrated by their search for a sponsor who can deal on their behalf with television companies; their representatives have contacted both Vernon Pugh, chairman of the Welsh Rugby Union and also of the IRFB, and Louis Luyt, president of the South African Rugby Football Union, since IRFB regulations permit only governing bodies to negotiate TV rights.

An IRFB statement yesterday confirmed an approach to Pugh from the clubs but said that a meeting could be set up "only with the consent and in the presence of representatives of the RFU. If the IRFB is requested to act as a mediator or to assist in discussions relating to a dispute, it would be prepared to do so, but only with the consent of, and on terms acceptable to, that union. The IRFB can provide the services of its acting secretary, Bob Weighill [a former secretary to the RFU] or any of its officials."

Bristol yesterday confirmed that Garath Archer would be leaving them to join Newcastle next season, and launched a blistering attack on the England lock forward. David Tyler, the director of rugby, claimed that Archer had made himself unavailable for selection for today's crucial meeting with Leicester. In the Courage Clubs Championship first division by failing to seek medical treatment for a knee injury incurred against Bath a fortnight ago, failing to train, and failing to turn up for contractual discussions with Alan Davies, the new coach, earlier this week.

TCCB clears Malcolm over criticism of tour

DEVON MALCOLM has escaped disciplinary action over his criticism of England's team management on the recent cricket tour of South Africa. Malcolm, the Derbyshire fast bowler, was cleared after an investigation by the Test and County Cricket Board (TCCB).

In a series of articles in the *Daily Express*, Malcolm claimed that he was verbally abused by Raymond Illingworth, the England manager, and also suggested that the criticism was racially motivated.

The TCCB statement said: "Malcolm has assured the board that in those articles he did not suggest or intend to suggest that the England manager or management had used language or exhibited behaviour towards him which was of a racist nature."

In return, the England management has assured Malcolm that it never intended to "cause offence or distress" to him. "The board has decided not to take the matter further," it said.

The TCCB noted Malcolm's previous "exemplary record on overseas tours" and that he "remains eligible for selection for England in future".

Dennis Amis, the chief executive of Warwickshire, yesterday put his weight behind Ian Botham's bid to become a selector. Speaking on BBC Radio Five Live, Amis said: "I believe Botham has got to be involved. He was such a great player and he has his heart in the right place. Even if he wasn't able to be a selector, his sheer presence would be a huge benefit."

New season opens, page 41

Super League opens with scoring spree

Tries, tries and tries again. In the Super League, a try is scored on average every eight minutes. The first 18 matches in the new rugby league competition have brought 183 tries — unprecedented scoring, which is trying some spectators' patience and converting others.

Before last night's game between Warrington and Halifax, matches had averaged 58 points, compared with 48 points in the first 16 games of the century season. The introduction of Paris Saint-Germain exaggerates the points equation, but, even subtracting the new side's 14 tries from the total try count, the figure of 169 still represents a 15 per cent increase in tries on the same stage last season.

The theory that tries equals entertainment equals more spectators is being born out by high-scoring yet competitive matches in many instances and a rise in crowds. It is the contrivance that the staunch traditional followers object to. That, and the remoulding, fancy packaging and new presentation of their sport.

What Sky Television, in its cover-

age, describes as "same game, different attitude" is half-true. In its short life, Super League has become almost a new sport, a cross between basketball, in terms of high scoring, and ice hockey, in terms of break-neck speed and the new interchange system, which allows six substitutions per side.

Fresh legs are quickening the game, while the now almost unlimited space at the play-the-ball — or play-touch-football, as it is in danger of becoming known — is an open invitation to attacking sides. With the weather still to warm up and pitches to become parched, the crumbling of defences has probably only just begun, unless improved fitness levels can bring about better defensive organisation.

St Helens, the Super League leaders, are the only one of the 12 teams to have conceded less than 20 points a game; at the bottom, Workington's defence is leaking an average of 52

points. If tries are so readily available, then the team that sorts out its defence would seem to stand the best chance of ultimate victory. As fast and spectacular as much as the action is, an ideological debate is raging about whether it is actually rugby league. The cuddled oafs are no more. Forwards no longer drive the ball up into the waiting embrace of an opposition forward. They are part of the seamless pattern, their distinction lost in the lust for speed. "Anyone even a bit slow is dead in this game," one player said.

A comment this week by Maurice Lindsay, the Rugby Football League chief executive, that players are getting better is not so much the case as they are going faster and, in the opinion of Garry Schofield, the most skilful player of his generation, are becoming less skilled.

Schofield, who now plays in the first

division for Huddersfield, says in *Super League Week*: "I think we [defences] ought to be no more than five metres back from the play-the-ball [the rule is ten metres], then we could find out where the players of skill are, because they would be the guys opening the defences."

"Australia have tried various systems and been through the big score syndrome. I can't accept that two sets of players who are so far apart can produce anything other than the kind of rugby league we are seeing at the moment. It's all loaded in favour of the big guys, with the element of skill down-graded."

When the day comes again to play Australia, Lindsay said that a fitter Great Britain side would be able to demonstrate improved performance levels. The question then would be: would they know how to defend? Sydney City's 10-4 defeat of Canterbury last week was described in Australia as the match of the decade. A defensive stranglehold is unlikely to be a feature of round four of Super League.



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US force sails for Liberia as anarchy imperils rescue

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON AND PETER CAPELLA IN GENEVA

AN AMERICAN naval task force was heading for Liberia yesterday as a complete breakdown of law and order complicated Pentagon efforts to evacuate hundreds of Americans and other foreigners from the capital, Monrovia.

The task force is sailing from the Adriatic and will take about ten days to reach the West African coast. It consists of the USS *Guam*, an amphibious assault ship, the USS *Connolly*, a destroyer, and three support ships with 1,800 US Marines on board. "We're planning for a contingency in a worst case," said an officer.

As anarchy swept Monrovia, American troops had to repel marauders who broke into the grounds of the US Ambassador's residence. Daylight helicopter flights were suspended after at least one was attacked by rocket-propelled grenades. The Pentagon dispatched additional helicopters from US bases.

International aid agencies and the United Nations were evacuating most of their foreign staff, but leaving behind local aid workers, as the country slid further into chaos. Ruth Marshall, a spokeswoman for the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, said the situation was untenable after a series of raids on the UNHCR compound. "There is almost complete anarchy in Monrovia. There are bodies in the street. There is really wanton carnage," she said.

Another spokesman, Francis Kpatinde, said: "It feels bad to leave. But what can we do? We can't move around. We don't have anyone to speak to. All the leaders of the factions are in Monrovia, but they are just silent."

Aid agencies were unable even to estimate the numbers of killed and wounded because it was too dangerous to go on to the streets. Médecins Sans

Frontières and the International Committee of the Red Cross said that they were trying to withdraw.

The UNHCR was caring for about 120,000 refugees from Sierra Leone in Monrovia, along with another 1.2 million Liberians who had fled from fighting elsewhere in the country earlier in the conflict. A spokesman said that they last visited the refugees several days ago, when they were short of food, water, and medical care.

The refugee agency and Unicef, the UN children's fund, were leaving their 123 Liberian workers in Monrovia. A handful of foreign staff from the UN were expected to set up a crisis cell in the suburb of Riva View, which is controlled by the African Ecomog peacekeeping force.

One UN official in Geneva said that, apart from reports of looting by the peacekeepers, Ecomog troops had "not even



Families who fled Monrovia wait to board a US Air Force transport plane at Freetown international airport in Sierra Leone yesterday

moved their little finger" to protect aid workers.

There are about 223 non-Liberian staff in the country, including 92 military observers. Most of the UN's expatriates were due to board a

freighter in Monrovia heading for Abidjan in Senegal.

About 900 US servicemen are assisting the evacuation. More than 800 foreigners have been rescued since Tuesday, including about 150

Americans and a few British, but they were the most accessible. US troops now have to run a gauntlet of gunfire to rescue hundreds more from refugees around the city. Until now all evacuations

had taken place from the embassy, a State Department spokesman said. "Now we're beginning to go out to points where groups of Americans and foreigners are located." A substantial number of foreign-

ers were reportedly collected from a defunct Voice of America radio transmitter station, and up to 100 missionaries and their families were said to have taken refuge at a Christian radio station.

African peace team in Monrovia talks

By SAM KILEY, AFRICA CORRESPONDENT

FIERCE fighting erupted yesterday around a Monrovia barracks where a breakaway faction was holed up with hundreds of hostages as a West African diplomatic delegation arrived in the Liberian capital.

As the peace team sent by President Rawlings of Ghana met Charles Taylor, the dominant warlord in Monrovia, his chief aide hotly denied that the fighting had broken out because Mr Taylor was bent on establishing himself as Liberia's President.

Heavy artillery and mortars pounded the sprawling barracks complex where Roosevelt Johnson and his largely Krahn tribal followers were holding at least 400 Liberians and 40 Lebanese as human shields against Mr Taylor's men — mainly descendants of freed American slaves — who have formed an alliance with the commercially powerful

Mandingo tribe. Elsewhere in the city looting continued unchecked.

A spokesman at the US Embassy organising the evacuation of foreigners said: "We are receiving calls all the time from people who want to come to Mamba Point [a beachside suburb where many embassies are based] but are unable to get here."

He said that no US military personnel had been sent on rescue missions into the town, but that the embassy security officer and guards from Mr Taylor's faction were touring "safer areas" in search of trapped foreigners.

General Johnson was accused of murder several weeks ago. But many foreign diplomats believe that Mr Taylor used the arrest warrant as a smokescreen in an attempt to impose himself as Liberia's President and end a power-sharing arrangement.

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Self-made men of North vie for Valentino vote in ballot battle of Milan

FROM RICHARD OWEN
IN MILAN

BENEATH the fairy-tale Gothic spires of Milan cathedral, a gleaming red 1955 Ferrari Monza is on display to advertise a new perfume. Nearby, in the discreet elegance of Via Monte Napoleone — Milan's equivalent of Bond Street — Gucci and Valentino vie for the attention of well-heeled shoppers.

This is one of the main battlegrounds of the election, now a week away. Silvio Berlusconi, the media tycoon,

ITALIAN ELECTIONS

former Prime Minister and local boy made good, is fighting for the key seat of Milan Central. The businessmen in

the city centre look much like Signor Berlusconi on his posters: suave, tanned, mobile telephone constantly to hand.

His main opponent in Milan Central also comes from the area. But Umberto Bossi, the tanned, bespectacled leader of the separatist Northern League, is rough-hewn by comparison. Like Signor Berlusconi, he has risen from humble origins; unlike the tycoon, who was a salesman and cruise-ship singer, Signor Bossi still looks like the local authority official he once was. The Bossi campaign buses

seem out of place amid power-dressed Milanese. Wagner blares from tinny loudspeakers as scruffy young men lean out of bus windows waving the League flag — a red cross on a white background — and trumpet the Bossi dream of a separate state. "Enough of taxes, enough of Rome, long live the Republic of Padania." The battle of Milan Central is vital not only for Signor Berlusconi's chances of becoming Prime Minister again, but also for the future of Italy as a unitary state. The 1994 election, fought with new

rules that were supposed to give Italy a clearer result and more stable government, produced a narrow Centre-Right majority under Signor Berlusconi. But the coalition collapsed after eight months when Signor Bossi withdrew his 120 deputies. This time the League is going it alone. "We have had enough of electoral alliances," said Roberto Calderoli, its secretary-general, in the party's down-at-the-heels headquarters. He denies the League is "secessionist", arguing that the media have misinterpreted

a policy of "autonomy for the nation of the North within a confederation". But Signor Bossi proclaimed the new state of Padania a month ago, defining it as the North as far down as Umbria. He gave an audience of shopkeepers and blue-collar workers — the League's natural constituency — a thoughtful analysis of the North-South divide. But he still whips up anti-Southern sentiment by accusing "those people in Naples and Calabria" of siphoning off "your hard-earned taxes". He also

pointed out that Signor Berlusconi has promised to cut taxes to help the self-employed, but owns the giant supermarkets that are putting shopkeepers out of business. Opinion polls nonetheless suggest the League's message may have lost its appeal. It was transformed from a fringe protest movement into a national force by the collapse of the established parties in 1992, after the Milan magistrates' anti-corruption drive. Lombardy, Piedmont and the Veneto still have a per capita income twice that of

Sicily or Calabria, and are enjoying an export-led boom. Northern Italy is one of the richest regions in Europe. Northern industrialists resent the fact that, because of the South, Italy is in danger of slipping into Europe's "second division" and has little hope of joining the single currency from the outset. Signor Bossi's antics and crude language no longer endear him to the middle classes. But nobody is writing off the League. It is still likely to win between 30 and 40 seats.

Hong Kong told by China to stay clear of politics

FROM JONATHAN MIRSKY IN HONG KONG

PEKING yesterday reassured foreign passport holders wanting to stay in Hong Kong after the 1997 handover, but issued a warning that the colony must not become a centre of political activity.

Lu Ping, Director of the State Council's Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office, said Hong Kong people of Chinese parentage, including foreign passport holders, will be regarded as Chinese if they live in the city after 1997 — as long as they do not declare openly they have the right of abode in another country.

Those of non-Chinese parentage who have lived in Hong Kong for generations and have no other home — such as thousands of ethnic Indians — will be entitled to legal residence, Mr Lu said.

His remarks will reassure many in such positions, but are unlikely to stem the tide of those seeking foreign passports in case the situation here becomes unbearable after 1997. Only senior judges and a handful of high-ranking bureaucrats cannot hold foreign passports, Mr Lu said. But such officials have the assurance of a British passport at any time, which means they can truthfully deny holding one. Legislative Council members, too, cannot hold foreign passports, Mr Lu added.

Zhou Nan, Director of the Hong Kong branch of the

New China News Agency, Peking's de facto embassy here, delivered a degree of tough talking to the same audience — a conference on the colony's economic future. Indeed, Mr Zhou has taken a tough line with foreigners since his early days as an interrogator of American and British prisoners during the Korean War.

In the only speech without an accompanying English

6 Peking uses the concept of stability to justify many crackdowns

text, Mr Zhou observed that Hong Kong is an economic centre and not a political one, and most people here did not want it to become an arena for political struggle. "Any attempt to change Hong Kong's position as an economic centre by any means will only harm its stability and thus harm its prosperity... more and more people realise that Hong Kong's stability must be protected."

Peking uses the concept of

stability to justify many crack-downs, including Tiananmen in 1989.

Only one speaker said explicitly that Hong Kong people are worried about the future, including the survival of a free press. He was Hiroshi Zaizen, a director of Japan's Mitsubishi Corporation.

Despite his stated intention to listen to the views of others, Mr Lu's week in Hong Kong will be devoted to making clear Peking's implacable position. This is understood here by those in the crowd of protesters who mobbed his car when he arrived at the airport, and by the leaders of the main teachers' union whose invitation to meet Mr Lu was withdrawn this week because they refused to approve, in advance of the meeting, China's establishment of a new appointed Legislative Council.

Chris Patten, the Governor, has also been barred. Mr Zhou has pointedly invited his deputy, Anson Chan, to dinner with Mr Lu next week. This continues what Mr Patten calls his "lunchless and dinnerless" tradition whenever Mr Lu visits the colony.

London: Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, will meet his Chinese counterpart, Qian Qichen, in The Hague on April 20 to discuss "matters of mutual interest, concentrating on Hong Kong", the Foreign Office said. (AFP)



The footprints of fleeing passengers left in the soot at the main terminal of Düsseldorf airport

Repair firm faces charges over German airport fire

FROM PETER BILD
IN DÜSSELDORF

GERMAN state prosecutors are to press charges of criminal negligence and manslaughter against a Dortmund maintenance company and its sub-contractor after the Düsseldorf airport fire in which 16 people, including a British soldier, died and more than 60 were injured.

Welding work has been established as the cause of sparks which travelled down ducting to ignite electrical cable on Thursday. The resulting ball of fire, which devastated nearly half of the terminal, which is one-third of a mile long, unleashed clouds of toxic black smoke which suffocated and poisoned its victims. The city's senior prosecutor, Rolf Chanteaux, said "all those concerned" with the maintenance work would be charged.

The British victim was Martin Smith, 22, who was serving with the 1st Battalion of the Coldstream Guards in Münster, north Germany. He was on his way to Britain on a week's leave to visit his girlfriend. The private from Tamworth, Staffordshire, joined the army in 1992. The airport authorities have come under heavy attack. Passengers described how the air-conditioning sucked up the poisonous fumes and blew them out into the arrival hall, creating a dense smog. The authorities are blamed for the failure to alert the city fire service for nearly 30 minutes. "By the time we arrived on the scene, there was nothing we could do," a fire officer said.

There was criticism, too, that passengers and staff were given no loudspeaker announcements or information. Defending procedures, airport chief Berndt Rietdorf claimed, that all the smoke detectors worked and the airport fire service was on the scene within four minutes. But a taxi driver raised the alarm when he saw smoke billowing from the building. By the time the airport fire service went into action, burning roof tiles were falling into the flower shop below the electric wiring ignited by the welding work.

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هناك امن الامل

Mother defends fatal flight of child pilot

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

FRAMED by tousled hair and a baseball cap, the smiling face of Jessica Dubroff, who died in a crash while trying to become the youngest person to pilot a plane across America, adorned almost every newspaper front page in America yesterday. As her mother defended the right of a seven-year-old to fly, aviation experts mourned a victim of "bad adult judgment".

In a tearful interview on NBC television's *Today*, Jessica Dubroff's mother, Lisa Blair Hathaway, said she had talked to her daughter in the cockpit of the plane just before she took off on Thursday from the airport at Cheyenne, Wyoming. Asked if she regretted allowing her daughter to make the flight, she said: "Oh, I'd have her do it again, in a second. You have no idea what this meant to Jess."

The crash, in which Jessica, her father and her flight instructor died soon after take-off from Cheyenne, provoked a wave of national sadness. It also prompted a federal review of the rules governing

flying by minors, and angry comment on the motives of highly ambitious parents.

"I ask anybody that questions whether Jessica should have 'gone up' to speak to somebody who loves her dearly," Mrs Hathaway said. "I guarantee they would say she should have been up there. She had a freedom which you can't get by holding her back."

Mrs Hathaway learnt of her daughter's death in Massa-

chusetts, where she was to have landed her single-engine Cessna yesterday after a three-day journey.

Before flying to Cheyenne to identify the bodies of Jessica and her former husband, Lloyd Dubroff, Mrs Hathaway said her grief was tempered by knowing that, when her daughter died, she "went with her joy and her passion, and her life was in her hands". Anticipating the furore that has since erupted, Mrs Hathaway said: "I beg people to let children fly if they want to."

Within hours, however, the head of Washington's Federal Aviation Administration had ordered a review of the regulations that allowed a seven-year-old who could barely see out of the cockpit to be at the controls of an aircraft in dangerous conditions. Under American law, 16-year-olds may fly solo and children of any age may take the controls if an instructor in the co-pilot's seat believes them to be competent. Yesterday criticism in America's aviation community focused on the judgment of

Joe Reid, Jessica's veteran instructor and owner of the Cessna 177B in which she was killed.

Fellow pilots were astonished that Mr Reid, who was legally in command of the aircraft, should have taken off in worsening conditions from a high-altitude airfield. In the thin air at 6,000ft at the foot of the Rockies, the 150-horsepower Cessna would have lost 20 per cent of its take-off power, experts said.

Others speculated that ice pellets in the heavy rain falling at the time of the crash might have caused icing on the wings, drastically reducing their lift. The aircraft stalled and nose-dived after failing to climb above 400ft. A commercial flight due to take off minutes later was delayed until the storm passed.

"This was a publicity stunt that went wrong because of bad adult judgment," Arthur Wolk, an aviation consultant, told NBC television. "Her mother says she was an aviator. She wasn't an aviator. She was a baby."



Jessica: "she was not a pilot, she was a baby"



Jessica's mother, Lisa Blair Hathaway, with her daughter Jasmine, aged three, before flying to the crash site

Walesa wins his pension battle

FROM REUTERS IN WARSAW

LECH WALESA was granted a pension for life yesterday for his services as a former President of Poland — paving the way for him to leave his £164-a-month shipyard electrician's job which he resumed last week.

A vote by the lower house of parliament will also mean lifetime pensions for General Wojciech Jaruzelski, the former Communist military strongman, and Ryszard Kaczorowski, the last President, now in exile in London.

The net pension of former Presidents will be about £1,052 a month, the same as the present President's basic pay. Mr Walesa, 52, returned on April 2 to register for the job at the Gdansk shipyard where in 1980 he launched Solidarity, the Soviet bloc's first free trade union, which went on to topple Communist rule in 1989.

Mr Walesa is not hard up but the authorities are pressing him to pay taxes on about \$1 million (£640,000) he received in 1989 from an American film studio, which Mr Walesa says he is not liable to pay.

Tax officials in Gdansk, Mr Walesa's Baltic coast hometown, said this week they could not establish whether he had to pay the tax demand or not and passed the decision to the Finance Ministry.

The Nobel prizewinner had made clear that once a pension was approved, he would give up his shipyard job — he repairs electric trolleys — to devote himself full-time to politics.

Mr Walesa has promised to help the debt-ridden yard to attract foreign investment.

Kim keeps power in Korea poll

Seoul: The ruling party of Kim Young Sam has managed to garner enough seats in South Korean elections to put together a working majority in the National Assembly.

Final tallies give the ruling New Korea Party 139 seats — 11 shy of a majority — allowing it to look for partners to forge a majority. The biggest loser was opposition leader Kim Dae Jung, whose National Congress for New Politics ended with 79 seats, below its goal of 100 seats. (AFP)

Tamil boats sunk

Colombo: The Sri Lankan Navy sank two Tamil Tiger boats that attacked ships in Colombo port at dawn, and two divers were killed as they swam through the northern entrance to the port.

Freemen give in

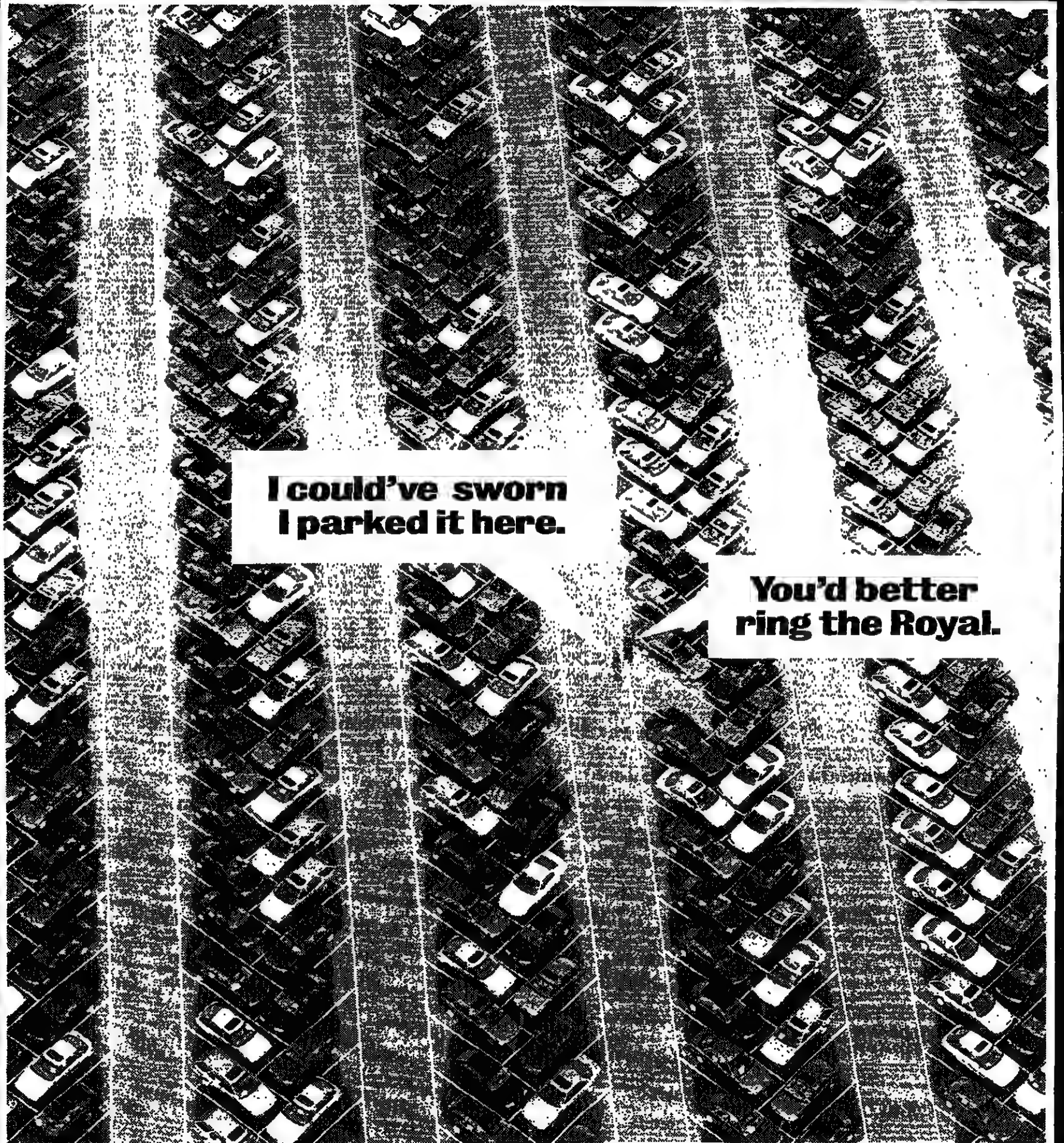
New York: Two of the anti-government Freemen protesters holed up in a Montana ranch — Ebert Stanton, 23, and his mother Agnes, 52 — surrendered to FBI agents on their 19th day under siege.

Well tragedy

Hanoi: Three people, including a boy aged 11 and his brother, died overcome by a lack of oxygen at the bottom of a 25ft well when they climbed down trying to save a chicken that had fallen in. (AFP)

Guru charged

Delhi: Chandraswami, a Hindu guru who counts heads of state and international celebrities among his acolytes, was charged with cheating an expatriate Indian businessman of £65,800 in 1988. (AFP)



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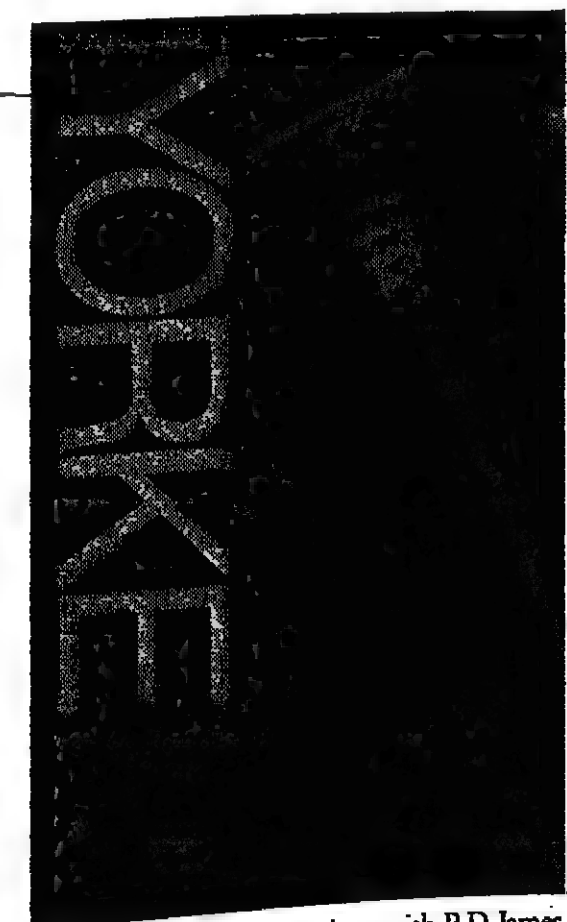
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'Imaginative' Tatyana Yeltsin tames hostile press as President's campaign gains ground

Papa's girl charms critics

WHEN President Yeltsin announced recently that he had appointed his youngest daughter to help to run his re-election campaign, critics in the Kremlin scoffed that the old man had allowed his heart to rule his head.

As Tatyana Yeltsin recalled in a recent interview, the first response by senior officials was to try to placate her by assigning menial tasks — organising youth projects and women's groups — to keep her out of the day-to-day running of the campaign.

"It was very difficult at the start, no one took me seriously," she told the weekly magazine *Ogonyok*, adding that the Russian leader's oldest and most trusted advisers still regarded her as a child. However, six weeks after the

MOSCOW FILE

by RICHARD BEESTON



mathematician and mother of two forced herself into the re-election team, she has earned the respect of many in the Kremlin for her quick mind and persuasive manner.

One Russian journalist who met her said that the President's daughter, who until recently was employed calculating the trajectory of spaceships, was learning her new job fast.

"It was obvious that she was not a professional," he

said. "She kept referring to Mr Yeltsin as papa, but it was also clear that she is far more imaginative than most of the advisers around him and is an asset to the campaign."

One of her first initiatives was to halt the regular formal meetings between the Kremlin leader and editors of Russia's leading publications, suggesting one-to-one sessions instead. The move has contributed to the extremely pro-Yeltsin coverage in the

press, which only a few months ago was frequently hostile to his leadership.

She has been credited with attracting an increasingly wide body of supporters to her father's campaign, thanks to her broad array of contacts and the fact that she has no real political enemies.

It is too early to say whether Mr Yeltsin's favourite daughter, who has inherited her mother's homely looks but her father's stubborn character, will use her sudden fame to launch her own political career. It is highly unusual for family members of Russian leaders to become involved in politics, particularly women. In Tatyana's case, both Aleksei Dyachenko, her husband, and Naina Yeltsin, her mother, want her home to look after Gleb, her six-month-old son.

However, many pundits have drawn the comparison between Tatyana Yeltsin and Claude Chirac, the daughter of Jacques Chirac, the French President, who masterminded his successful election campaign and is now his press secretary at the Elysée Palace.



Father figure: Boris Yeltsin exploits his image as a family man

Women give lift to hopes of politicians

THE voting habits of Russian women may have a decisive effect in the forthcoming presidential elections, but predicting their tastes in politicians has always been problematic.

To pinpoint which of the candidates appeals most to female voters, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, the Moscow daily newspaper, recently asked women in the capital which leading politician they would refuse to share a lift with alone. Not surprisingly, the least popular choice was Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the ultra-nationalist firebrand who, in spite of a recent charm offensive to woo women voters, is still best remembered for beating a woman deputy in parliament last year. About 27 per cent of the respondents said they would not go near a lift if he was standing beside it.

President Yeltsin, who has been emphasising his role as a devoted husband and father, did better, with only 8 per cent of women refusing the "lift challenge" with him. Gennadi Zyuganov, the Communist front-runner, was marginally more popular.

Those who fared best were Mikhail Gorbachev, the former Soviet leader, Yegor Gaidar, the former Russian Prime Minister, and Aleksandr Lebed, the burly former paratrooper.

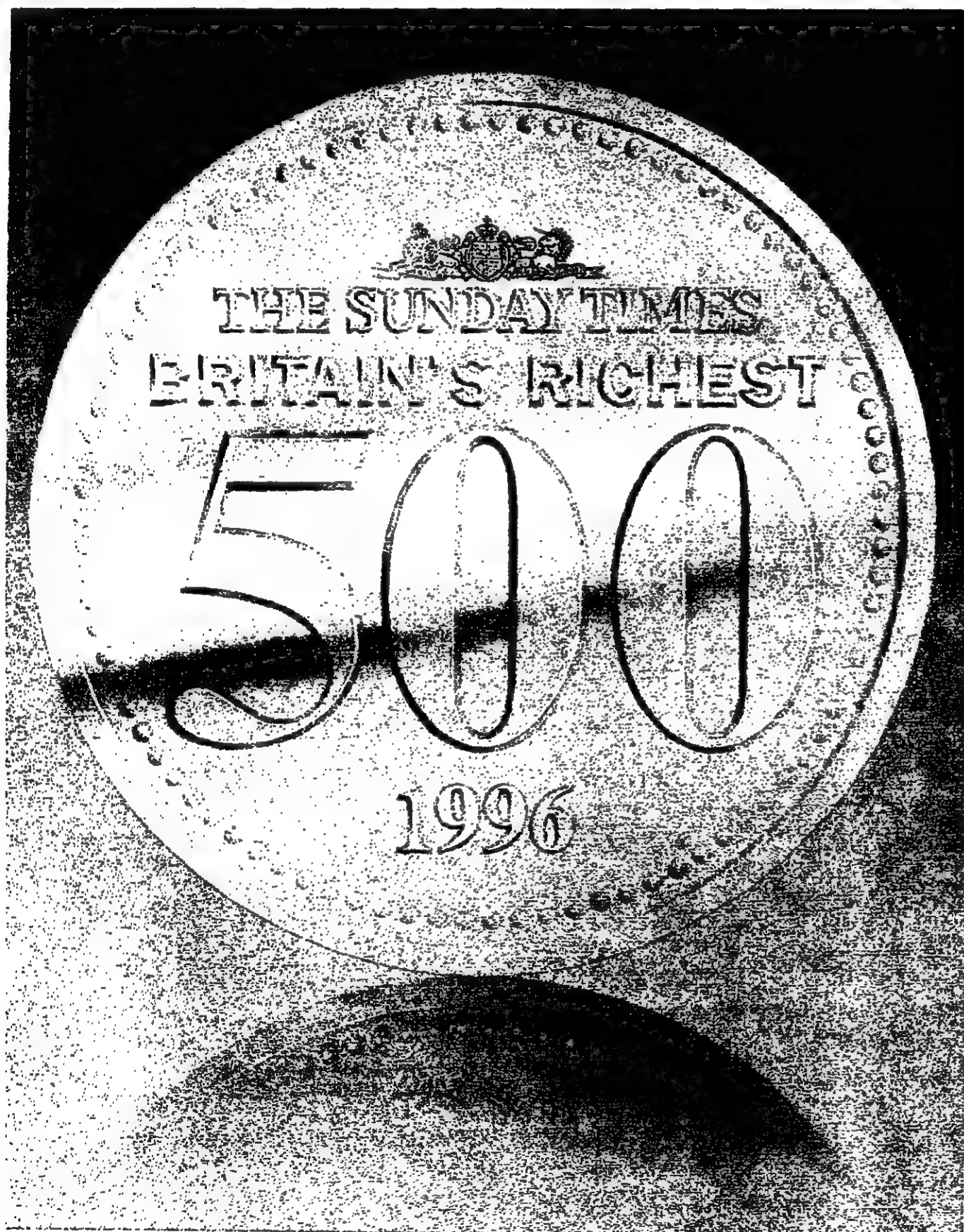
Tales of the Muscovite mafia

AFTER years of being subjected to Western police serials, regarded as far too tame by most Russian viewers, *Muscovites* will soon be able to watch a series devoted to the brutal world of their own criminals.

The new police drama, called *In the Name of the Law*, will be a co-production between

Nikita Mikhalkov, the Oscar-winning Russian director, and some of Hollywood's best producers and writers. The series, which follows the exploits of an honest detective fighting corruption, was proposed after documentary-style films on the mafia were considered too dangerous.

THE SUNDAY TIMES



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Mother suspected of Paris murders

FROM SUSAN BELL
IN PARIS

THE architect, Marguerite Zakrzewski, found hanged on Tuesday with her murdered husband and two sons in the wealthy Paris suburb of Sceaux, became the main suspect in the case yesterday as police received the first post-mortem examination results showing that she was the last to die.

Investigators believe that the father and elder son were killed on Sunday night while the mother and younger son did not die until the next day. Traces of drugs were found in the bodies. More definitive post-mortem examination results are expected over the weekend as police check reports that Mme Zakrzewski visited Sceaux on Monday.

The bodies of the family were discovered by a school friend of the couple's elder son Adam, 16, who visited the Zakrzewski house when neither brother turned up for classes after the Easter weekend. Like his father Piotr, 48, also an architect, Adam was discovered in his bed, virtually decapitated. Both had apparently been killed while they slept.

The body of the younger son Arthur, 12, was discovered close to his mother. He had been strangled and hanged. The family were all wearing pyjamas except for Mme Zakrzewski, who was elegantly dressed. Police said last night that her clothing was without bloodstains and that her body showed no sign of struggle.

No blood was found near the bodies or anywhere in the house, which police say had been cleaned after the murders.

Spaniards hunt for drug case fugitive

FROM DOMINIQUE SEARLE
IN GIBRALTAR

SPANISH Civil Guards were searching yesterday for a Spaniard who escaped from a boat chase for suspected drug smugglers which ended with a Spanish helicopter crashing into the sea, killing one of the crew.

The authorities in Cadiz said they had been unable to trace more than 1,300lb of cannabis which two men have allegedly confessed to unloading on a near beach near La Linea, the town bordering Gibraltar. The men — a Gibraltar and a Moroccan — were held after the chase.

Spain has accused Britain of failing to stop drug and tobacco trafficking from Gibraltar. Royal Gibraltar Police confirmed that the owner of a rigid inflatable boat who was arrested in the operation has been released on bail.

Queues continued to build up yesterday as people crossing to and from Gibraltar were subjected to stringent checks imposed by Cesar Braña, the regional Governor, after the incident. The Rock's trading community is concerned that if these controls are sustained — it was taking up to an hour just to walk into Gibraltar, and nearly four to drive out — tourists and shoppers will stop coming from Spain.

That would quickly set off an economic crisis for Gibraltar, which has already suffered from the reduced presence of the Ministry of Defence. In ten years the military's contribution to the local economy has fallen from about 60 per cent of the total to 6 per cent. Another 700 jobs are planned to go over the next two years.

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■ OPINION

Sad spectacle on sawdust can't we do something to revive our 200-year-old circus tradition?



■ THEATRE

The effects of war on humans, and a non-human, are explored in Martin Sherman's *Some Sunny Day*

THE TIMES
ARTS

■ BASE NOTES

Crazy for You, the musical based on Gershwin's best tunes, goes on national tour



■ BASE NOTES

Gloria Estefan will supply the anthem for this summer's Olympic Games in Atlanta

When I come to write my indispensable reference tome, *Bad Nights Out* in Norfolk, I shall certainly include last Tuesday's dismal debacle. It had seemed such a good wheeze at the time: take the kids to see a "traditional" circus before the forces of political correctness finally succeed in expurgating all performing animals from British life. But, like most of my good wheezes, it proved to be a horrible mistake.

We entered a field outside Norfolk. We handed the best part of £40 to Chipperfield's Circus. We watched four youths do a skipping-rope routine that could be managed by reasonably sprightly pensioners. This turned out to be the first act. We watched a man attempt to start a cardboard box until his trousers fell down. The programme claimed that he was a clown. If he was a clown, I am the Patriarch of Constantinople.

Where were the fire-eaters, knife-throwers, sword-swallowers, death-defying high-wire stuntmen,

What we need is bread for circuses

mind-boggling contortionists? Perhaps it was their night off. True, three gnomes produced a few elementary spins on a trapeze. But there was nothing worthy of an "oh!" or an "ah!" here.

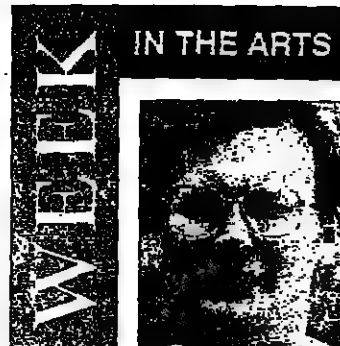
In any case, any audience reaction was drowned by a raucous stream of noise from a four-piece band. "At least it's live music," I yelled at my wife. Whereupon she shook her head and yelled back: "I'm not wearing a watch." Enigmatic woman, my wife.

What of the animals? A woman brought on a few horses and made them stand on their hind legs. A man brought on some oddly docile tigers. Guess what? They stood on their hind legs too. Somebody else brought on three sea lions and threw hoops at them. Sometimes the hoops looped over the sea lions' heads; sometimes they missed altogether. Amazing.

As a grand finale, three boys did wheelies on pushbikes. "I can do that," said my younger son. Not quite the gob-smacked reaction for which a father hopes after he has spent £40 treating his family to the circus. But a fair comment, I fear. This show had all the dangerous allure of a knitting pattern.

What has gone wrong with our circuses? You don't have to be very old to recall the era when Bertram Mills and Billy Smart toured the country with hundreds of performers: human and beastly. Now the British circus is reduced to this: a damp squib in a damp field outside Norfolk. Smell of the greasypaint? Roar of the crowd? You must be joking.

Some claim that British circuses effectively died in the early 1980s, when many local councils — encouraged by the RSPCA — banned animal acts from their



RICHARD MORRISON

land, alleging that the training was cruel. Clearly, the "breaking in" of any performing animal is not a job for soft hearts or liberals, and in some parts of the world the methods can be grotesque. In

Moscow a few years ago I asked a top Russian circus boss how he achieved the unique feat of getting chickens to dance to *Swan Lake*. His answer may have lost something in the translation, but it definitely involved saucers of boiling water.

British circuses, however, have never stooped to these horrific practices, and they claim to be victims of hypocrisy in a society that happily watches grueling equestrian events — or, for that matter, approves the politically expedient slaughter of 30,000 healthy cows each week. It is a fair point. But actually I don't think the decline of the British circus has much to do with the animal ban. The sad fact is that, as with practically every other physical recreation, the British taught the world to play the game but

have now been thoroughly outclassed by our former pupils.

Abroad, circus is considered chic, exciting, even intellectually stimulating. The Canadian-based Cirque du Soleil has redefined the form as vast acrobatic ballets. Russian circus clowns, who think nothing of interpolating Shakespearean skits into their acts, have achieved cult followings across the world. So has Archais, the wild motorbike-and-chainsaw circus from France. In Monte Carlo, glamorous circus festivals are held under royal patronage.

In short, foreign companies are nurturing the circus equivalent of Disneyworld, while ours — those that still exist — appear to be stuck in Butlin's circa 1955. Consequently, our best acrobat-entertainers are going abroad; that's the only way they can earn a living. Yes, I know that we have several small,

successful "physical theatre" groups. But what I am talking about are spectacular, populist entertainments, not art-house specialities. Are we really content that the country which produced Chaplin, Monty Python, Benny Hill and Peter Sellers cannot now compete with the French and the Canadians in the field of surreal visual humour? Good grief, I knew things were bad, but I didn't realise they were that bad.

So here is a populist challenge for the Arts Council. Let's resuscitate the 200-year-old tradition of British circus, both as a vibrant art form and as a potentially huge money-spinner. The lottery was surely invented for tasks like this, and a little seed money spent on top-quality training and equipment would be quickly recouped. Let's put the "oh!" factor back into our cultural life. Remind the world that nobody performs better on sawdust than the British. And never again allow the Greatest Show on Earth to disintegrate into a bad night out in Norfolk.

Only the alien is out of place

Brecht says somewhere that war is a weird physical field that turns everything in its ambit topsy-turvy. Courage, caution, honesty, trickery: whatever works effectively in peacetime becomes self-defeating in war. Decent people are transformed into monsters or behave like lunatics, and zit-high orange blobs from space are magicked into elegant young men who stalk about dressed like T.E. Lawrence.

All right, Brecht did not say anything about orange blobs. That is a detail gratuitously added by Martin Sherman, author of this quaint, diverting play. But the behaviour of the characters in *Some Sunny Day* supports Brechtian physics. They are human particles impelled by the prospect of disaster to demonstrate Heisenberg's uncertainty principle.

The physical field is Castro in July 1942. Rome is expected to break through British lines at any moment. Our embassy is burning documents, which is why bits of burnt marked "top secret" keep landing on people's heads. Jews are hunting visas that will get them into Palestine. Rumours abound, branding just about everyone in Roger Mitchell's fine cast as a Nazi spy.

None of them is that. But they are all acting as if their body temperatures have jumped to 104. Sara Kestelman, who pretends to be a Russian grand-duchess but is probably a Polish Jew on the run, reacts to a wasp as if it

were a doodlebug. Cheryl Campbell also spends a lot of time screaming and dashing feverishly about William Dudley's shabby-grand Islamic interior, only to recollect herself, and explain in vicarage-lawn tones that she is having a "mad scene". But then she has good reason for desperation, for her diplomat husband is besotted with a belly-dancer.

Emily, as Campbell's character is called, ends up sticking pins into a model of the dancer, while Horatio,

her husband, ends up ending Emily. He is played by a sweaty, mottled Corin Redgrave with a blend of subtle authority and self-satisfying humour I had not realised was in his range. In peacetime, Horatio is, as he primly says, "a novelist of at least minor importance". Wartime has turned him into a murderous monomaniac, comically unable to see that the wildest excesses of paranoia and greed are even mildly abnormal.

The play's message is that there is more in heaven and earth than is dreamt of in Horatian philosophy. English emotion turns out to be violent. And earthly emotion in general would probably seem remarkable to any visiting Martian. This is not mere rhetoric, either. Perhaps I am giving away secrets Sherman would prefer me to suppress; but here goes. There is a space intruder in *Some Sunny Day*, and he is indeed pleasantly astonished by human feelings.

Rupert Everett's Robin may seem to be a chiselled, laid-



"Human [and one inhuman] particles impelled by the prospect of disaster to demonstrate Heisenberg's uncertainty principle": Sara Kestelman, Rupert Everett and Corin Redgrave in a scene from Martin Sherman's *Some Sunny Day*

back Antipodean journalist, but he actually belongs to a species that can read minds, twist metal, and do other things which explain why Uri Geller gets "special thanks" in the programme. He is also sufficiently moved by hearing Mozart and having an affair with the genial young soldier played by David Bark-Jones to recognise that our race has its inner strengths too. It is a good performance, but a questionable idea on Sherman's part. Is it wise to give a play so eloquent about human unpredictability a twist that lifts it out of the realm of the human? Does not sci-fi fantasy, especially fantasy that turns cutesy at the end, compromise what the play has to say about reality? The play left me in an accepting, upbeat mood, but I did wonder. I really did.

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MUSICALS

Back in his *Salad Days*, Julian Slade recalls the first performance of his hit show



RISING STAR

At the age of 14, Glasgow-born Iain Robertson finds that he is Britain's newest film star

THE TIMES ARTS



CHOICE

From Philip Schofield to Sibelius: see our new guide to top shows in Weekend, pages 12 and 13



ON MONDAY

Terry Gilliam talks about the making of *Twelve Monkeys*, and working with one Bruce Willis

Jeremy Kingston talks to Julian Slade about 40 years of *Salad Days*

Evergreen returns

Twenty years ago, *Salad Days*, the musical with the magic piano that makes people dance, was revived in the West End to celebrate the twentieth (in fact, twenty-second) anniversary of its first appearance there. Next week at the Vaudeville the fortieth anniversary (ie, the forty-second) is likewise commemorated, and perhaps some far-planning impresario is already thinking ahead to the year 2016.

Julian Slade, co-author with Dorothy Reynolds of the book and lyrics, and sole composer of the music, will then be in his mid-eighties. By that time he may be unable to move around his Chelsea basement flat because the scores of ornaments and mementoes, already populating every level surface, will have invaded all corners of the carpet.

There is even a piano on Slade's piano, but it is a miniature reproduction of the one in the 1954 show, which in its day was the longest running musical in the world, outlasting New York's *Oklahoma!* and London's *Chu-Chin-Chow* and *The Boy Friend*, the other home-grown, tune-packed musical of the period.

The story behind the show also has more than a touch of theatrical magic: a production planned to last three weeks at

the Bristol Old Vic transfers to London and runs for six years. "I was their resident composer," Slade explains, "writing incidental music for the productions, and I had collaborated with Dorothy, who was a member of the company, on two Christmas shows, which had been pretty successful. So Denis Carey, who ran the Bristol Old Vic in those days, asked us to write a summer revue, and the first thing I wrote was *Cleopatra*."

"But after I'd written the number, Denis changed his mind. He thought it would be better to have a musical play, particularly as we now had a title. It was suggested to us by the barmaid at the theatre. The company had done *Antony and Cleopatra* as part of the spring season, and she had heard *Cleopatra* say, 'My salad days, when I was green in judgment'. When she told us she thought it would make a good title, we all said, 'Olive, you're a genius! Now we've just got to think what it's going to be about.'"

What he and Dorothy Reynolds created was a story of two people, just out of university, who are not sure what to do next. "We wanted to write a fun show for the existing company. But we were very conscious that there were a lot of young people around — and I was only 23 — who were

being pressurised by their families, and I'm sure that's where the first ideas came from. The idea of Timothy being pressurised to find himself something to do and Jane being pressurised to make a good marriage. They decide to solve this for her by marrying each other, because they've been bosom pals at university, and find a job which is nothing to do with their parents. Then in walks the tramp with the piano. He offers them £7 a week to look after it for a month. And the piano turns out to make everybody dance."

The original cast were virtually unknown outside their local audience, but Ned Sherrin's production offers two stars, Kit and the Widow. Kit Hesketh-Devereaux plays all Timothy's uncles, including Uncle Zed, who arrives on a flying saucer, and the man in

the dress-shop. "We've turned him into another uncle, so that's a slight change in the plot." The Widow, otherwise Richard Sisson, plays the non-speaking part of Troppo, the clown who guards the piano. Does he get the chance to play? "Oh, yes. That's the great difference in this production: the piano works. In the original the keyboard was a dummy and it was all mimed in the pit. And by some amazing chance, not only Richard but David Morton, who is the tramp, and Simon Connolly, who's Timothy, can also play the piano, and they do."

And suddenly everyone starts dancing. "Look at me! Oh, look at me!" Sometimes a magic piano is not needed if a tune is catchy enough.

● *Salad Days* opens on Thursday at the Vaudeville Theatre, Strand, London WC2 (0171-836 9087)

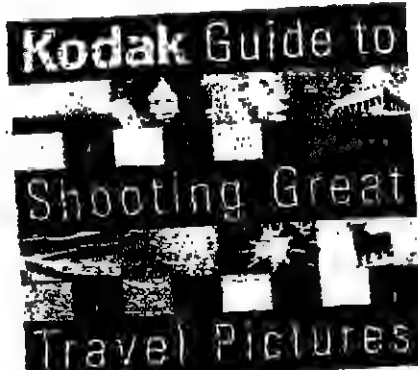


Julian Slade on *Salad Days*: "We were very conscious that there were a lot of young people around — and I was only 23 — who were being pressurised by their families, and I'm sure that's where the first ideas came from"

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SEE THE TIMES ON MONDAY FOR FULL DETAILS

The Tory party needs a stronger, more conservative manifesto to allay anxieties and rally support, says John Redwood

Robert Peel's *Tamworth Manifesto* rallied Conservatives. It gave them a programme for reform. It released the energies of British manufacturing for a generation. It defended what was best in the previous decades.

The Conservatives' manifesto for this most recent by-election offered no such vision. It was rejected by the voters. It leaves the party needing a new impetus to carry it to victory in the general election.

There is a temptation for both politicians and journalists to misinterpret by-elections. Opposition parties, when they win, claim it proves they will win the country. Governing parties, defending and losing, say these results are of no significance, merely a protest vote.

The truth is somewhere between the two. The Staffordshire South East by-election does not prove Labour is bound to win. Nor should it be brushed too readily aside by the Government. This is no longer mid-term. People's worries should be taken seriously. The seats lost in by-elections in the last Parliament did not prove difficult to win back in the general election, but that general election confirmed a loss of support in many marginal seats. 1992 brought the majority down with a bump.

It is time for some soul searching by the Conservatives. What does the party have to do to re-establish its winning ways? How can it set out a ringing declaration,

How to win back Tamworth

like Peel's at Tamworth? Can it fashion a policy to the temper and needs of the age?

Election results that at home and abroad politicians are not measuring up to the magnitude of the problems. The economy is recovering from the early 1990s slump, but so far it has proved a voteless recovery. People still distrust the state of trade, fearing that their jobs may be the next to go in some great corporate restructuring. They still find selling their houses a difficult, painful business.

They sense the whirlwind of change that global trade and new technology are unleashing but feel their leaders have let them down, not explaining it enough or helping them enough.

It was such a time of change that fathered the Tamworth declaration. New manufacturers felt threatened by tariffs and taxes. They welcomed Peel's onslaught on these impediments to prosperity. Today, the Government should explain why we welcome the new technology. It should restate the case for free trade and for taking a global view of our future.

The English language and our enthusiasm for computers and communications equip us well for this new world. Rules

and regulations should be cut back, opportunities grasped. A crusade to raise educational standards is needed. It requires tough decisions on styles and standards of teaching. These will be so much the easier for explaining that there is a purpose, that our children have something to look forward to. By thinking globally and excelling at English and computing we can capture the jobs and incomes we need. If we want and expect one of the highest living standards in the world, we must work effectively and supply the goods and services the new age expects. The Government should explain how we can do that.

People feel let down by the tax increases of recent years. Conservatives have to show that this year's reductions are the start of a programme to lower the burden on the majority. Tax cutting is a moral crusade. It leaves people with more freedom to choose. A prosperous economy trading with the world is the way to cut welfare and taxes together, as people gain jobs they shed income support.

People are worried that this Government is destroying cherished institutions. In particular they see it as no friend of the

National Health Service. At a time of considerable uncertainty about jobs and family incomes, people need even more reassurance that if they were to fall ill they would be looked after. It is no good saying that there have been more operations and more treatments, if what people see is the closure of their local hospital and worries about the availability of beds at the district hospital. We would all find it reassuring if beds and hospitals stayed open unless there was general agreement in the local community that the hospital had outlived its working life.

A Conservative Government, at a time of change, has to tell people that some changes are necessary, irresistible, even for the better. It should try to prevent any other change, to leave people with some stability in their lives.

Many voters found the closure of Bart's Hospital, and the rumours threats to Admiralty Arch and Greenwich, unacceptable. Why need these things change when so much else has to? They find it odd that, at a time of all too many families breaking down, the Government should choose to introduce proposals which

liberalise divorce, while no steps are taken to restore the married man's tax allowance. Wouldn't that reassure, by showing that Conservatives still think two parents have a role together in bringing up young children?

The Government needs to define some lines which it is prepared to defend. Which of our inherited and cherished institutions is the Government committed to supporting? We need to know, so that we can rally behind a sense of belonging to a community with a past and a future.

Above all we need to know how the Government proposes to build a Europe of nation states out of the Lego of the Community's institutions. Many in the nation agree that this is what we want. We want trade and friendship, not common government.

Many have been horrified to realise just how much power has already ebbed away from us. They were surprised that we needed permission to require seat belts in coaches for schoolchildren. Many have been horrified that the EU can ban our beef for sale anywhere in the world although many customers and the Government here think it safe. Practically all

resent the damage done to our fishing industry by the common fisheries policy.

The Government needs to show our European partners that we keep our word. We want to influence Europe for the better. We have ideas that could lower the dole queues and get business moving again. That is more important to most people in Europe than the next steps towards a centralised state. We need to show that Europe, as well as Britain, will prosper only if it opens windows on the world. We need to trade with America and to swap technology with Asia. We should do more to help the new democracies to the east of our continent to prosper by pulling down the barriers to fair exchange. We need to show that there is a better way than the Franco-German big government scheme, which is destroying jobs and worrying many people.

When Deleue visited Tamworth he reported that it was "a fine pleasant trading town, eminent for good ale and good company, of the middling sort". Such a Tamworth still speaks for a Britain that can prosper gently by thinking globally. Tamworth can be won back by the Conservatives at the general election. To do so will require a stronger manifesto than was served up there in the last few weeks. It will require a manifesto which touches the uncertainties and worries of electors about their own futures and the future of our nation.

Swan of Avon, son of Rome

Margarita Stocker defends her claim that Shakespeare was a secret Catholic

Have you ever wondered why, from the Royal Shakespeare Theatre at Stratford-upon-Avon, to sports centres in seaside towns, the country is strewn with more productions of *Macbeth* than even the most fervent Bardolator could possibly want?

No doubt some future pundit will marvel at this phenomenon and conclude that in the Nineties we flocked to the Scottish play and to *Braveheart* because we had fallen in love with Scotland. Alas, the reason is more prosaic: the Department for Education has decreed that every schoolchild in the land must study *Macbeth*, and this captive audience is the answer to any cash-strapped theatre's prayer. We are being force-fed *Macbeth* — with or without madwomen urinating onstage — simply because of the commercial dictates of historical circumstance.

To mention this rudely realistic fact may offend those who jealously guard the Bard's reputation as a universal genius, untrammelled by time and place. Yet, albeit tremendously gifted, he also was a man of his time: an ambitious, balding, bisexual playwright from a provincial town in Reformations England.

Consequently, when it was reported on Tuesday that I had found in *Love's Labour's Lost* new evidence that he was secretly a Roman Catholic, another Shakespeare scholar dismissed my article as "rubbish" — because the play "still works on stage", and if Shakespeare's intentions are a mystery we should leave it that way. The fact is that scholars have long suspected that there is more to this seemingly light romantic comedy than meets the untrained eye. Hitherto, we have not even been sure how many apostrophes to put in the title. Now, perhaps, we can do better than John Major, who fluffed a jibe at the opposition benches when he referred to some play called "Love Labour's Lost".

Like the actor who, touring in *Macbeth*, furiously told a noisy audience of schoolchildren to "shut the f--- up", Shakespeare was also at the mercy of historical circumstance.

Thirty years before Shakespeare's birth, England was officially declared Protestant, and 60 years after his death the Government was still executing Catholic subversives. In Elizabethan England, the sizeable minority of recusants who held to the Old Faith risked the threat of prosecution, financial and corporal punishment, and — since Catholics were automatically suspected of treason — even death. Since religion was the crucial issue of the time, whether one attended evensong on a Sunday was a matter for beady-eyed local surveillance. And such evidence

as we have suggests that the local authorities were very unhappy about the Shakespeares.

We know that William's mother, Mary Arden, was a Catholic, and despite strenuous attempts to conceal his religion, her husband was nevertheless accused of recusancy — accurately, since he left to posterity a written confession of faith inspired by Jesuit teachings.

The playwright's marriage to Anne Hathaway may have involved a Catholic ceremony, and it was said that he "died a Papist": a statement often dismissed because it was made after the Restoration. But Shakespeare's younger daughter did not die until 1662, so family and local knowledge were hardly remote from the facts. His elder daughter was herself prosecuted for recusancy in 1606.

A young man determined to make a successful career as a playwright-actor-manager was compelled, if a Catholic, to conceal his faith. He was merely joining the ranks of other crypto-Catholics, such as the musician William Byrd, whose livelihood depended upon aristocratic patronage and a royal court in which virulent Protestant politicians so often called the tune. Moreover, the commercial theatre in London pandered to a crowd-pleasing Protestant jingoism which Shakespeare rarely bothered to satisfy — unlike his rival Thomas Dekker, who made a career out of it.

Indeed, several of Shakespeare's plays suggest a basic emotional commitment to Catholicism. The Ghost in *Hamlet*, for instance, presumes a Catholic belief in purgatory. Even in a play of unabashed Tudor propaganda, *Henry VIII* (mostly written, in fact, by John Fletcher), the most sympathetic characters are Cardinal Wolsey and the Catholic queen Mary whom Henry had divorced.

Love's Labour's Lost has been an enigma for 400 years because it is a cryptic protest against the persecution of Catholics. Clever enough to evade censorship and prosecution, the play is nevertheless packed with references to religious controversy and political figures that are instantly recognisable to a contemporary audience. And if we too have at last got the message, then Shakespeare has revealed to us what was probably the single most significant fact in his life.

The next time you watch an actor exploring the personal angst of *Macbeth*, remember that that play is shot through with references to the Catholic Gunpowder Plot. Never mind *The Scottish Play* — we should call it *The Bonfire Night Play*.

Dr Stocker is a fellow of St Hilda's College, Oxford.

Shakespeare reveals to us the most significant fact in his life

But what will Labour do?

In the first of six articles, Anatole Kaletsky begins the most detailed scrutiny of Opposition policy so far

Usually it comes between the aubergine caviar and the salmon en papillote, though sometimes it can be staved off until the moment of decision between coffee and camomile tea. Sooner or later, however, the dreaded question has to be faced by anyone who claims to know about British politics these days: "Yes, but what will they do?"

The dinner-party consensus is no longer interested in whether Labour will win. Everyone knows that John Major could pull off a surprise victory, since nothing in politics can be ruled out. But beyond that there is little of interest to say about who will be the next Prime Minister. The conversation thus quickly turns from "who" to "what".

"What will Blair do, then? Will he raise taxes? Will he really take

By the time I went to see Mr Blair and his colleagues before Easter, I could recite a dozen blueprints for restoring the "industrial base", the "infrastructure base", the "skill base", the "science base" and even the "academic-research base" (the last three all in a single paragraph of Mr Mandelson's book).

Contemplating this mountain of verbiage — which Labour is desperately trying to computerise to allow instant responses to Tory disinformation campaigns — I realised that a lack of policies was the last thing Labour could be accused of. Indeed, I doubt if so many detailed plans have ever been produced before an election by any opposition party — or governing party for that matter. (It is odd how rarely people ask what on earth John Major would do with five more years in power.) Why, then, the near-universal belief that Labour has nothing definite to offer beyond Mr Blair's grin? There are at least three reasons, apart from natural reluctance to read Labour's broken-backed prose.

Firstly, Mr Blair, for all his speeches and policy statements, has remained evasive on the key economic issues — above all the questions of tax and monetary policy which obsess both the media and the middle class. This obscurity has been deliberate. It is an article of faith in the Blair camp that the plans for higher taxes announced just before the last election were largely responsible for Labour's defeat. From this premise Labour has concluded that the way to avoid another debacle is not to reveal their tax until the last possible moment. This is an odd idea, if you think about it, since that was exactly what John Smith did in 1992. But more of that on Monday.

Labour also has a more positive reason for dodging economic commitments. Rather than offer-



All smiles in the Shadow Cabinet — but would Tony Blair be safe from a palace coup?

ing clear alternatives on tax, inflation and economic growth, Labour's strategy is merely to attack the Tory record and so neutralise the traditional Tory lead on these issues. Labour can then concentrate on battlefields like education, health, welfare and the quality of life, where Mr Blair's brand of ethical "socialism" can rout the mercenary individualism of the Tories.

Opinion polls confirm Labour's view that education, health and welfare now matter more to voters than economics. And in all these areas — which I will examine next week — Labour is far ahead. But keeping attention focused on social issues may become more difficult as the election approaches. This is Labour's second problem in coming across as a party that knows what to do with power.

Mr Blair believes, quite rightly, that governments can often get things done without spending public money. Instead of raising new taxes or changing the monetary framework, a government can change priorities, revise legislation, reallocate public spending or simply try to change the climate of opinion. Mr Blair also believes, again with justice, that successful reforms in education and welfare could contribute greatly to prosperity and long-term economic growth. Yet most people persist in thinking that economic policy is critical, not only in winning elections, but also in running governments. As long as Labour's economic policies remain obscure, therefore, attention will constantly shift back

from his chosen social battlefield to the economy. And the longer Mr Blair tries to avoid revealing his economic commitments, the more suspect his entire programme will become — and the greater the risk that a wavering middle class will succumb to the Tory propaganda machine.

This leads to Labour's third, and most troubling, credibility problem. Are Mr Blair's promises any guide to what Labour would do in power? Again and again in my conversations with businessmen and middle-class voters, I heard the phrase "remember the GLC". Many voters still seem to fear a post-election palace coup, modelled on what happened in 1983 when the "loony Left", led by Ken Livingstone, ousted the moderate Labour leadership within 24 hours of Labour winning control of the Greater London Council.

The Blair camp is well aware of this lack of trust. Indeed, they say openly that their biggest electoral challenge is to persuade the voters that the likeable Mr Blair is the authentic face of new Labour. To borrow a phrase from the world of computers, Labour must prove it is now a party where "what you see is what you get". But this critical task, too, is made more difficult by Mr Blair's evasiveness on economics. As we shall see on Monday, the outlines of an unthreatening and plausible strategy can be discerned in Labour's economic pronouncements. Yet Mr Blair refuses to put the middle class and the

business community at ease by spelling out his full plans.

The same turns out to be true on education, health, welfare, industry or local government. The broad plans are clear enough, but when one gets close enough to seek the critical details, the policies begin to shimmer and vanish like a mirage.

If he could allay suspicions once and for all on future levels of taxes, the minimum wage and a few other critical variables, Labour would become virtually invulnerable to the only weapon the Tories seem to possess — the question of trust. But if Mr Blair allows middle-class suspicions to fester, he may find it hard to stop defections back to the Tory fold as the election draws near.

Mr Blair must perceive the political merit of allaying suspicions well before the election. To win trust today is much easier than to wait for the feverish atmosphere of an election. Why, then, doesn't he announce the critical details that could make his policies stand up — whether on the top rate of tax, minimum wages or the method for weeding out incompetent teachers?

Is it because revealing the full Labour agenda would be political suicide, as the Tories claim? Is it because he must hide his true intentions for fear of provoking the class-warriors of old Labour? Or is it because he really does not know what he wants to do with power?

These are among the questions on which I hope to shed some light in the next week.

Simon Jenkins is away.

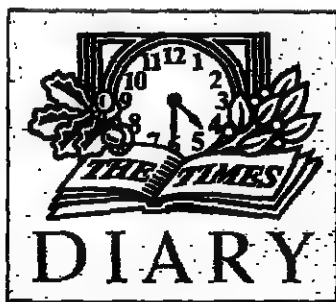
Reign fall?

THE SEPARATION of Princess Alexandra's daughter Marina Mowatt and her far from distinguished photographer husband Paul comes just days before a disastrous poll for the Royal Family. On Monday, a television documentary will show that republicans have increased in number by at least 300 per cent over the past decade.

For its programme *The Republic of Britain*, World in Action's MORI poll shows that at least 25

per cent of Her Majesty's subjects want a republic. Foremost among them are many Labour supporters, and Tony Blair will be less than enchanted by the views of Jon Norton, the partner of his Northern Ireland spokeswoman Mo Mowlam. He suggests on the programme that the Royal Family's time is past.

Canvassed on the most suitable member of the Royal Family to take over the reins from the Queen, many more individuals opted for



the Princess Royal than for the lacklustre Prince of Wales. And Betty Boothroyd was the most popular choice as a potential president of a British republic.

The republican agenda, meanwhile, appears to be penetrating our most sacred institutions. I understand that a bunch of royal lookalikes is hoping to stage its show, *The Fairytale Royal Wedding*, at Lord's cricket ground. There is talk of a topless Diana, but the show's organisers insist that the actors will remain clothed.

Auld enemy

SCOTTISH Nationalists are crowing over a rare victory. Michael Forsyth, the feisty Scottish Secretary, has withdrawn from next week's planned commemoration of

the 250th anniversary of the Battle of Culloden, when the Duke of Cumberland quashed the forces of Bonnie Prince Charlie and the Jacobite rebels.

The Scottish Office is saying that Forsyth must attend a Cabinet meeting in London on Tuesday. A senior civil servant will take his place. The Scottish Nationalists say "pah!"

The National Trust for Scotland had already warned of the over-emotional types who are dogging the anniversary. Nationalist hot-heads recently sprayed the commemorative Cumberland Stone with the words "murderers" and "British genocide". The SNP, who accused Forsyth of wanting to use the commemoration as a photo opportunity, will be at Drumossie Muir, three miles from Inverness, in force. They claim that their motives are in some strange way untainted by political considerations.

High price...

AFTER the Tories' latest by-election defeat in Staffordshire South East, some senior Conservatives are suggesting that their party should not even bother contesting by-elections in future. While Brian Mawhinney, the party chairman,

seemed gripped by a strange gallows humour yesterday, and the Prime Minister was said to be in good spirits, they must still face the fact that each by-election costs the party about £100,000 and results in nothing but humiliation.

Harold Wilson provides the inspiration here. He was the first modern Prime Minister not to travel to constituencies during by-elections. After some initial flak, his decision became a firmly established precedent. Thanks to Wilson, John Major does not have to campaign in by-elections. Why not



"I'm afraid our bloody-nose department has been closed"

extend the principle so that the party in power does not have to waste precious resources?

Summit talks

A HEAVYWEIGHT logistical problem exists in the Yorkshire Dales: how to elevate Lord Healey to the summit of one of the region's highest peaks. The ramblers and conservationist group Friends of DalesRail want their president to unveil a plaque atop the 2,731ft Pen-y-ghent.

The friends have ruled out portly Healey ascending under his own steam. "To be honest, I've been ducking sending the invitation to Lord Healey," says the secretary, Frank Reynolds. "How will we get him to the top? A helicopter?" Healey is keeping his head down: "I know nothing about it," he says.

Spaced out

EVEN THOUGH he is life-president and a former chairman of Watford Football Club, Elton John, the folkily-challenged singer, has been stopped from parking his Bentley in the directors' car park. At the last match, car and chauffeur were dispatched to the lesser guest car park further from the



Angry Elton

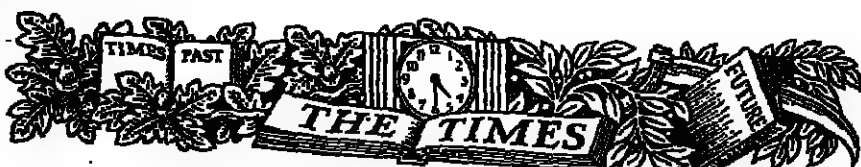
stadium. So appalled, apparently, was our Elton that he left before half time, in a huff. The club secretary, Jock Alexander, says there was no room.

● He was laid to rest in Highgate Cemetery in 1883, but Karl Marx, the father of Communism, has been brought back to life. In the last bulletin of the Association of British Science Writers, his name appeared on a blacklist of members who failed to pay the correct subscription fee.

P.H.S.



Royal lookalikes play up the monarchy.



BY-ELECTION BLUES

They woke up in the morning, stared defeat in the face

"We still have a lot of work to do," was the understatement of the day from John Major, contemplating his party's dreadful defeat in the Staffordshire South East by-election. Less insightful was the end of his sentence: "to get our message across". It is a cliché of Tory party conferences that electoral unpopularity is blamed on poor presentation. But politics is about more than public relations. Political success demands leadership, vision and competence, and this administration has been marked by a lack of all three.

Again the Tories were left wrongfooted by the scale of Labour's victory on Thursday night. At the start of the campaign, there were mutterings that this might be the first seat since Richmond in 1989 that the Conservatives would hold. Such a success would mark the beginnings of an electoral recovery. As the weeks wore on, the Tories became more realistic: a Labour majority of under 5,000 would be presented as a turning point. But the actual majority of 13,762 on a 22 per cent swing surpassed their worst fears.

They could not even realistically claim (though they tried) that Tories had just stayed at home. In fact the turnout, at 60 per cent, was relatively high for a by-election. What should worry the Conservatives is that so many of their supporters actually voted for Labour. A victory on this scale for the main Opposition party is unprecedented at this point in the electoral cycle.

Time is running out and so is the Conservative majority. Each month that passes without a turn-up in the polls makes the recovery that would be needed to win the next election steeper still. And the danger increases that Mr Major might be forced into an earlier election: the gap facing him in the polls could be gaping. He must soon realise that his tactic of twinning an economic recovery with scare stories about Labour is not enough. A return of the "feel-good" factor may be a necessary condition of a Tory recovery, but it is by no means sufficient. And attacks on Labour's competence have little force unless the Government is demonstrably more competent than its rivals.

It is sometimes said by Tory strategists that the party is seen as "cruel but efficient" while Labour is "compassionate but incompetent". Yet such has been this Government's record of mismanagement that it risks being labelled as "cruel and incompetent". Faced with a choice between a Labour administration that might be incompetent and a Tory one that has proved itself so, voters might well decide to risk the former.

The Conservative Party may argue all it likes about whether it should shift to the Right or fight Tony Blair on the centre ground. Both tactics have flaws: a shift to the Right cedes the centre to Labour, a patch of territory that Mr Blair has shown himself delighted to occupy. Yet if the Tories do not show clear differences between themselves and the Opposition, voters may feel reassured in voting for what will seem like a mere managerial change.

But ideology is a second-order problem if a Government is not capable of running the country properly. BSE was not a party political issue, but it seems extraordinary that, over ten years, ministers could not have made advance plans for the contingency that BSE might be connected with CJD. Instead we saw the spectacle of ministers failing in public, departments squabbling, decisions being overturned and an industry threatened with bankruptcy. Neither consumers nor farmers have been mollified.

Europe is the one issue on which the Conservatives could really outflank Labour. Yet, because of party divisions, the message even there has had to be one of studied opacity. No wonder the voters are determined to punish the Tories. They believe little of what comes out of ministers' mouths; and the words themselves are meagre enough.

PERES BOMBS LEBANON

Israel's security and its Prime Minister's election

The war between Israel and Hezbollah, the armed, extremist Shia organisation based in Lebanon, took a grave and bloody turn yesterday. Israeli warplanes bombed Beirut for the second time in 24 hours, as well as pounding several villages in the war-scarred Bekaa valley. Among the dead were members of Hezbollah and a number of innocent civilians. Disturbingly, 12 Syrian army soldiers were reported also to have been wounded, some critically.

This vicious little war, which predates the Oslo accords, and which has been slowed not at all by the Arab-Israeli peace process, continues to sap Israeli morale by its relentless, attritional character. Counter-attack, in the region's well-worn manner, swiftly followed attack, and the conflict has now acquired a more intense complexion than even most Israelis feared. Deaths, injuries, the evacuation of civilians, the destruction of property and the disruption of commercial life have now occurred on both sides of the border. And Shimon Peres, the Israeli Prime Minister, has given warning that the attacks on "Hezbollah positions" in Lebanon are not about to cease.

Why has Israel acted in this way? Why did Mr Peres authorise the first direct Israeli attack on Beirut for 14 years? There are two explanations: the first is that the steady increase in the intensity of rocket attacks by Hezbollah on northern Israel could not have gone unanswered; and the second, simply, is that Mr Peres faces the Israeli public in a general election within a few weeks.

The second fact is not unrelated to the first: Mr Peres has always had a reputation in his own country as a leader "soft" on security. This reputation is, of course, baseless. Yet the smear is an old one and Mr Peres has had to spend much time, in the

run-up to the elections, cleansing his name of it. A failure to respond to the Katyusha attacks by Hezbollah — mainly on electorally-sensitive border towns like Kiryat Shmona — would have played straight into the hands of Benjamin Netanyahu and the Likud opposition. In any case, the rocket attacks had begun to acquire disagreeable proportions: Mr Peres would have been correct, even in a non-electoral climate, to adopt a muscular response.

The affair, however, has another dimension, one which illustrates clearly the Israeli Prime Minister's dilemma. The missing element in the Middle East peace is an accord between Israel and Syria: this accord, it has so far been assumed, will deliver the occupied Golan Heights to Syria in exchange for cast-iron guarantees of non-aggression from Damascus. These guarantees, it has also been assumed, would include the end of the war with Hezbollah.

Yesterday's stepping-up of the border war, however, has made peace with Syria increasingly improbable. Ominously, it may also have marked a further stage in Hezbollah's graduation from Syrian puppet to independent menace. The last few months have seen a decline in Syrian control over the Shia organisation: the bombing of Beirut, with its accompanying inflammation of Lebanese nationalism, will only enhance Hezbollah's self-portrait as the guardian of Lebanese sovereignty.

Mr Peres faces a delicate equation: he must hit back at Hezbollah or risk losing votes in the forthcoming election. But he must not use force in such a way as to put in peril a prospective peace with Syria. How he balances these two factors will be a test of his statecraft. But excess here, clearly, would be the enemy of success.

MONTREZ VOS BILLETS

It is no longer 'tickets please' on Network SouthCentral

At least this time the French will have a station to remind them of an historic victory, rather than a terminus for ever associated with the end of Napoleonic gloire. Hastings, conquered yesterday by a transport subsidiary of Generale des Eaux, will surely take pride of place among the south coast stations that are now part of the French-owned London & South Coast rail franchise. The French connection, luckily, does not reach Waterloo: that prize eluded the acquisitive utility company in the first franchising round. Instead, the railway will operate from three London stations: Victoria, London Bridge and Charing Cross, the last having a happy French ring to it as the name reputedly comes from "chère reine", the beloved Queen Eleanor commemorated with crosses around the country.

Passengers to cosmopolitan Brighton may now be hoping for a dash of Gallic charm and cuisine on their daily commute. Will croissants and fresh coffee replace the fading whiff of kippers? Will there be railway hostesses in chic Parisian fashions, wine-tasting in the buffets, beakers full of the warm South as the commuters approach Norwood Junction?

Alas, such dreams founder on the drab realities of rail franchising. There will be few trains *a grande vitesse* on the lines to Kent, Sussex and Surrey: the L&SC will be a faint echo of the mighty London, Brighton and South Coast railway — the company in

whose cloakroom the handbag containing the infant Jack Worthing was deposited. The new company, like the new France, will be cutting costs, and commuters will have to put up with refurbished stock and 32-year-old slam-door trains until the next century.

There are consolations. The parent company made its money in water, and consolidated its track record in trams, buses and coaches in France. It does not have the rail muscle of SNCF, but neither does it have the bloated payroll of the nationalised French network. It promises to invest £10 million in station improvements and better services, and passengers on even the least glamorous lines may be touched by French *élan*: L&SC promises more off-peak services through Lower Sydenham, more Sunday specials to Croydon via Tulse Hill. And with its intimate knowledge of water, Generale des Eaux may discover how to deal with the wrong kind of snow.

To rail historians the deal may seem like the revenge of Joan of Arc. Britain, the inventor of railways, gave France its rail gauge, its habit of driving on the left and the original Stephenson locomotives that plied the first line from St Etienne to Lyons. Will the trains that clatter down to Worthing and Chichester now bear the names of Jeanne d'Arc, Molière and de Gaulle? And will commuters, arriving at a revamped galleonised Victoria remark: "C'est magnifique, mais ce n'est pas la gare."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Social change and scratchcard games

From the Director General of the National Lottery

Sir, It is disappointing that you chose to give credence, in your report of April 10, to allegations from the Directory of Social Change (DSC) that Oflot had failed to carry out appropriate research on National Lottery spending patterns. Despite what the authors of *The National Lottery Yearbook* may claim, the facts are rather different.

My office has conducted research using four different organisations over the last ten months. One of those bodies, National Opinion Polls, has now carried out seven separate surveys on scratchcard purchases. We began this work within four months of the first scratchcard game being launched.

The DSC is well aware of our work in this area. Indeed, we sent them a detailed report on our social-research programme in February.

For the record, I would like to make it clear that there is no evidence from my research that scratchcards have caused excessive participation in the UK. Nor has it shown that they have created damaging social effects. I am, of course, continuing to monitor the situation closely. Should circumstances require it, I will not hesitate to take whatever action is necessary to carry out my statutory responsibilities.

On a separate point, the DSC suggests that Oflot should prosecute retailers who sell National Lottery tickets to those under 16. I report all such incidents to the relevant police force. If the DSC had checked the legislation it would have known that we are not empowered to mount such prosecutions.

Yours faithfully,
PETER A. DAVIS,
Director General,
Office of the National Lottery,
2 Monck Street, SW1,
April 10.

From Mr Irving Luke

Sir, The distribution of lottery cash to worthy causes remains a contentious issue. The solution is obvious... decide by lottery.

Yours etc,
IRVING LUKE,
44 Fairfax Road, NW6,
April 11.

Tory blues

From Dr R. K. Knight

Sir, Three hundred years ago the Tories lost the seat at Tamworth, Staffordshire, to Thomas Guy.

One would like to think that Mr Guy, who sat as the Whig MP from 1695 to 1707, is looking down with satisfaction at the by-election result (report, later editions, April 12). He would certainly be very angry with the present Government, which is trying to destroy the hospital he founded and endowed.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT KNIGHT,
Keats House,
Guy's Hospital,
St Thomas Street, SE1,
April 12.

From Mr M. J. Slater

Sir, In his article, "Beware a slaughter too far" (April 11), Nicholas Budgen refers to rough shooting and states: "I don't want to stop anyone else shooting but I do not want to shoot myself."

In the light of the news today from Staffordshire South East this will be a relief to John Major and the Conservative Party.

Yours faithfully,
M. J. SLATER,
Leycroft, Barton Loan, Edinburgh,
April 12.

Genius of Vermeer

From Mrs Robina Cooke

Sir, I would like to thank Simon Jenkins for his refreshing article, "The cleansing of Vermeer", (April 6).

I studied and greatly enjoyed 17th-century Dutch masters when at school and have been to Holland several times to continue the pleasure. The quality of light and simple domestic side of Vermeer's work have always appealed to me.

As Mr Jenkins says, not a great deal is known about Vermeer — but why the constant need to search and invent when we are left with such a legacy? Surely these pictures, with all their charm and serenity, say all that we need to know?

Yours sincerely,
ROBINA COOKE,
Llanerch Fochwel,
Walespool, Powys,
April 8.

Time warp

From Mrs F. H. Cave

Sir, I recently discovered what appears to be a grave problem with digital clocks.

How do you explain to a child who says she woke up one morning at "eight dot dot two four", that she could find the comet at 10 o'clock from the Pole Star?

Yours faithfully,
FREDA H. CAVE,
86 Summerlands Park Avenue,
Ilminster, Somerset,
April 7.

Vocal objections to Mary Stuart

From Lady Antonia Fraser

Sir, The Friends of Mary Queen of Scots, if such an association existed (and why not?), would like me to point out that she actually spoke English with a Scottish accent, not a French one (letter, April 12).

Queen Mary spent the first six years of her life speaking Scots, not French. When she went to France in July 1548 she was far from being cut off from Scots-speakers. She took with her numerous Scottish attendants, such as her nurse Jean Sinclair, her governess Lady Fleming, and a train of children of the Scottish nobility, including the girls known as the Four Maries.

As a result Queen Mary was still able to speak Scots fluently when she returned to her native country 13 years later: both the English ambassador and the papal envoy mention the fact that it was her preferred language.

When Mary Queen of Scots fled to England — and captivity — in 1568 she began painfully to learn English from her first captor, at Bolton Castle.

Of course there is nothing wrong with the casting of a distinguished French actress to play the part of Schiller's *Mary Stuart* to signify her "French-ness" (although by the time Schiller's play takes place Queen Mary had spent far more time in England than she had in France). Schiller

takes liberties with history: so why should not a director?

Isabelle Huppert's beauty and grace on stage did the character of Mary Queen of Scots proud. It is true that her comprehensibility on the press night was virtually nil, leaving all the lines, not only the best lines, for Anna Massey's virtuoso Elizabeth I. But then the Friends of Mary Queen of Scots are well used to the contest being rigged in favour of the English Queen...

Yours sincerely,
ANTONIA FRASER,
52 Campden Hill Square, WR,
April 12.

From Sir Rowland Whitehead

Sir, Miss Sandy Carlier is quite right: my wife and I understood not a word of Isabelle Huppert's lines in the National Theatre's production of *Mary Stuart*.

If the actors depicted "real life" then surely they, too, would not have understood her and we should have heard them say, "Eh?", "What's that?", "Come again?" or suchlike. But we didn't.

Yours sincerely,
ROWLAND WHITEHEAD,
Sutton House,
Chiswick Mall, W4,
April 12.

A few factors to feel good about

From Miss Cordelia H. J. Hime

Sir, I am bored with hearing Labour trying to worry people about job insecurity, taxation and living standards. Inflation, the key to securing economic growth that will last and ending the days of "boom and bust", has been below 4 per cent for longer than at any time in the last 50 years.

Unemployment is lower than in any other major European country. The proportion of national income taken by the State is lessening, allowing us to spend or save as we wish. Many of the burdens on business have been swept away. Cutting red tape and state interference helps business and industry to generate the wealth that makes Britain a more prosperous place.

The benefits of careful management by a Conservative government are clear. Only the Conservatives can build on Britain's success to create a nation of opportunity in the next millennium.

Yours faithfully,
CORDELIA HIME,
(Committee member,
Putney Conservative Association),
Field House, 248 Dover House Road,
Roehampton, SW15,
April 12.

Conflict in Liberia

From the Africa Director of Save the Children

Sir, Contrary to any impression that your readers might gain from a news report in your later editions today, Save the Children intends to stay in Monrovia and not to abandon Liberians in an hour of desperate need. We will be attempting to bear witness to what is happening, to give whatever humanitarian assistance we can and to restart full aid operations at the earliest opportunity.

We cannot do this alone. It is vital that a larger international presence should remain. Your leading article today puts the onus on the United States; but the United Nations as a whole must maintain an effective presence, as the secretary-general has urged.

For five years the UN has set on the sidelines, sanctioning an experiment in regional peacekeeping whose record has been dubious at best. This is not good enough. With Liberians now

facing a double emergency — hunger and need in the countryside, violent disruption in the capital — the UN at all levels, from field representatives of the key humanitarian agencies up to the Security Council, must re-engage with Liberia.

A political resolution must be found, aid operations must be supported, and the monitoring force (Ecomog) mounted by the Economic Community of West African States needs to be reconstituted, to protect the population, the aid community and the strategic points of the city.

British influence can be particularly significant, as a major funder of Ecomog, as an important link to regional powers including Nigeria and Ghana, as a member of the European Union which is the biggest aid provider, and as a member of the Security Council.

Yours faithfully,
MARK R. BOWDEN
(Africa Director),
The Save the Children Fund,
17 Grove Lane, SE5,
April 11.

Alternative medicine

From Earl Baldwin of Bewdley

Sir, The implied argument in Nigella Lawson's article about complementary medicine ("Don't grow old, grow up", April 3) that non-conventional equals New Age equals quackery has little good evidence to support it but then, as she admits, she has "little in the way of evidence to bring to bear".

New Age is in any case a strange term to apply to a body of medicine which includes such well established disciplines as acupuncture, homeopathy, healing, chiropractic and osteopathy which are used extensively and

to patients' satisfaction for such conditions as hypertension, asthma, back pain, stress, depression and cancer.

Further, no treatment can of itself be "unscientific" as she describes "alternative" medicine: it either works or it doesn't. If it does work it is the job of science to discover why, which may involve rearranging some cherished dogmas.

Yours faithfully,
BALDWIN OF BEWDLEY
(Joint Chairman, Parliamentary Group for Alternative and Complementary Medicine),
House of Lords,
April 4.

Bard and Apocrypha

From Professor the Reverend Canon J. R. Porter

Sir, You report (April 9) that Dr Margarita Stocker finds evidence of Shakespeare's Catholicism from the names of his daughters, Susanna and Judith, which occur in the Apocrypha, books which, she says, were "denounced as bogus by the Protestant establishment of the time".

This statement is nonsense. It was only the Puritans who wholly rejected the Apocrypha. The position of the official Elizabethan Church was quite different. Thus, the 39 Articles of Religion of 1571, while stating that the Apocryphal writings are not to be applied "to establish any doctrine", commends their reading "for example of

life and instruction of manners".

The Calendar of 1561 orders the reading of the Apocrypha, including the whole of Susanna and Judith, once a year in the course of the daily services of morning and evening prayer. The Edwardine and Elizabethan books of homilies, to be read by the clergy to their congregations, frequently quote from the Apocrypha.

Yours faithfully,
J. R. PORTER,
36 Theberton Street, Barnsbury, N1,
April 9.

Weekend Money letters, page 38

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.

Hymns to sooth a fearful traveller

From Dr Nicholas Marston

Sir, Mrs Lorna Boyce (letter, April 8) seeks guidance for an appropriate hymn to precede her daughter's journey through the Channel Tunnel. She will surely be comforted by Cardinal Newman's splendid *Lead, kindly Light*, amid the encircling gloom.

Yours faithfully,
NICHOLAS MARSTON
St Peter's College, Oxford,
April 9.

From Mrs M. R. Harkness

Sir, Surely the most appropriate hymn for a venture through the Channel Tunnel would be *Rock of ages, cleft for me*.

Yours faithfully,
MARGARET HARKNESS,
7 Cloisters Road,
Leitchworth Garden City,
Hertfordshire,
April 8.

From Mrs Frances M. Allison

Sir, I suggest Martin Luther's hymn, based on Psalm 130 (*De profundis*): *Out of the depths I cry to thee, Lord God! O hear my prayer!*

Yours sincerely,
FRANCES M. ALLISON,
Coombe Cross Bungalow,
Ditisham, Dartmouth, Devon,
April 8.

From Mrs P. M. Beevers

Sir, Whether crossing to the Continent by air, sea or tunnel, I suggest that *Make me a channel of your peace*, based on a prayer by St Francis, would be appropriate.

Yours faithfully,
P. M. BEEVERS,
84 Main Street, Newbold-on-Avon,
Rugby, Warwickshire,
April 9.

From Mr G. E. Edmondson-Jones

Sir, Writing as one who is nervous of air travel, I think Mrs Boyce's daughter should be encouraged to sing, preferably to herself, *Give us the wings of faith to rise*, by Isaac Watts.

I certainly find it a comforting thought that, if perchance I should meet my Maker on the flight, I had recently expressed the hope of joining the saints above.

Yours sincerely,
GERALD EDMONDSON-JONES,
Richmond Garth,
Oulton Road, Easingwold, York,
April 8.

From Professor W. C. Noble

Sir, Might not a verse from the "commuters' hymn", Bishop Heber's *The Son of God goes forth to war*, suffice: *They climbed the steep ascent of Heaven through peril, oil and pain; O God, to us may grace be given To follow in their train.*

Yours faithfully,
W. C. NOBLE
(Professor of microbiology and a commutator),
University of London,
United Medical and Dental Schools,
St Thomas' Hospital, SE1,
April 8.

From Mr Peter Gladstone

Sir, I am reminded of the occasion in the early 1950s when a helicopter arrived to collect the Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, from The Meadows to attend a meeting elsewhere. This mode of transport was innovative for an Oxford don at that date and Dean Jonathan Lowe sensibly asked some members of the Junior Common Room to pilot the event.

As he left a large group of spectators sang *Hail the day that sees Him rise*. On his return he was greeted with *Low, He comes with clouds descending*.

Yours etc,
PETER GLADSTONE,
Fasque, Fettercairn, Kincardineshire,
April 8.

From Lieutenant-Colonel J. M. Cockram (ret'd)

Sir, Mrs Boyce's letter prompts memories of the First World War, when *Christians awake, salute the happy morn when Revellie*, *When He cometh* meant CO's parade. Tell me the old, old story from an officer's lecture and *Praise God for whom all blessings flow* meant Dismiss.

What means this anxious, eager throng? signalled the 5pm serving of tea.

Yours aye,
JOHN COCKRAM
(General Manager),
The Royal British Legion Training Company,
Ordnance Road, Tidworth, Wiltshire,
April 9.

From Mrs Ann Hughes

Sir, With tendencies towards claustrophobia, and mindful of a long interlude in the dark en route to France, *Through the night of doubt and sorrow* would be the only hymn for a journey through the Channel Tunnel.

But I am about to drive northwards. Is there no suitable hymn for the M5/M6 interchange? I am sure that hundreds of motorists would find it a comfort if one could be found, as there is obviously no other solution to the problem.

Yours sincerely,
ANN HUGHES,
Fiddlers Green, Castledore Road,
Tywardreath, Par, Cornwall,
April 10.

OBITUARIES

VICE-ADMIRAL JOHN BULKELEY

Vice-Admiral John Bulkeley, United States Navy, wartime PT Boat commander, died on April 6 aged 84. He was born in New York on August 19, 1911.



ONE of the US Navy's most decorated veterans of the Second World War, John Bulkeley was the quintessential PT Boat man, the exploits of whose exploits in the Philippines in 1942 were memorably described in W. L. White's book *They Were Expendable* (1942) and later re-enacted by Robert Montgomery and John Wayne in John Ford's classic film of the same name. Perhaps Bulkeley's most notable mark on events was his evacuation in March 1942 of General Douglas MacArthur from Corregidor to unoccupied Mindanao, from where he and his party were airlifted in two Flying Fortresses to safety in Australia. It was on landing that MacArthur, with his flair for public relations, made his famous "I will return" declaration. In those dark hours, such an eventuality seemed remote, but MacArthur was to discharge his promise when he came ashore again in the Philippines early in 1945.

But for Bulkeley and his six-boat squadron this was actually merely one episode in five months of constant action against the Japanese. In the dreadful months of early 1942, when Allied land, sea and air power seemed doomed to be swept from the Pacific theatre by the Japanese onslaught, the fast Patrol Torpedo Boats were involved in some desperately brave actions against much superior forces.

Graduating from the Annapolis Naval Academy in 1933, Bulkeley was a young lieutenant in the Pacific Fleet at the time of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. Commanding a group of PT Boats, he took part in the defence of the Philippines against the Japanese.

The fall of the islands was a painful episode in the life of the American Caesar, General of the Army Douglas MacArthur. Despite improvisation, great courage and some reinforcements, muddle and indecision allowed Japanese air power a free hand in wiping out Clark Field as well as other American airfields and bases. Nevertheless the Japanese assault was resisted for far longer in the Philippines than anywhere else in the Pacific and South-East Asia theatre. Corregidor actually held out until May 1942. Although perceived as a severe blow at the time, the five-month defence of the islands had badly disrupted the Japanese timetable, since General Hottel had been allocated only 50 days to complete the campaign (Malaya and Singapore had been conquered in two months). By the time it fell, the US Navy was almost ready to go on to the counter-offensive, and the Japanese were soon to experience the reverses of the Coral Sea and Midway.

During the struggle for the Philippines, President Roosevelt repeatedly ordered MacArthur to turn his command over to General Wainwright and leave, in order to be available to take charge of the build-up and retaliation. It was like ordering a captain to be the first to leave a sinking ship. MacArthur, with his strong West Point notions of honour, had pledged himself to die with his men.

Nevertheless he was eventually persuaded, and with the naval C-in-C, Admiral Chester Nimitz, and their brilliant galaxy of subordinates, MacArthur subsequently planned and executed what informed commentators judge to be the most strategically inspired campaign in history — the defeat of Japan in the Pacific.

Bulkeley had already distinguished himself in a number of actions against invasion shipping off Batavia, all of which were conducted in circumstances of the greatest difficulty. His squadron's supply base had been completely destroyed in the Japanese bombing raid on Cavite on December 10, 1941, and they were left without spare engines. Ammunition for the PT Boats' 50-inch machineguns had to be scrounged from whatever units — army, navy, marines or air force — could be persuaded to part with it. In addition, all its 100 octane fuel had been adulterated with a wax by a pro-Japanese saboteur, so that the boats' carburetors and filters needed to be cleaned after two hours' running.

Without any shore backup all mechanical and electrical repairs and maintenance had to be done by the officers and men of the squadron in isolated, mosquito-infested inlets, frequently under sudden and violent enemy air attack. It was a tribute to Bulkeley's courage and to his engineering background that his boats continued not only to function but to fight and cause severe harassment to the invasion forces.

MacArthur himself described the bearded and swashbuckling PT Boat commander officer as "Johnny Bulkeley, that bold buckaroo with the cold green eyes". By contrast, Bulkeley remembered MacArthur on the embankment quayside at Corregidor, looking emaciated in his worn khaki, his face dead white, and a nervous twitch at the corner of the mouth.

The passage from Corregidor to

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"Well, I'm home": General MacArthur in April 1945 on Corregidor from where he had been evacuated by Bulkeley, left, in 1942

Mindanao was made in very rough weather, in which it was vital to anticipate and avoid Japanese warships and aircraft. All the party were very seasick. But three of Bulkeley's four PT Boats survived the passage through 600 miles of enemy-held waters, in spite of the fact that their speed was much diminished by their makeshift engine maintenance and lack of spare parts.

For his service in the defence of the Philippines, Bulkeley was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, the nation's highest military decoration. In 1943 he played his part in breaking through the barrier of the Bismarck Archipelago and the invasion of New Guinea, shooting up Japanese supply convoys and strafing shore installations. On one occasion, he sent a boarding party in old navy style to capture a ship that would not sink.

Moving to the European theatre in 1944, Bulkeley, now a lieutenant-commander, took part in the invasion of Normandy, where he commanded a group of PT Boats and minesweepers in support of the landings at Utah Beach. Later in June, when the forts on the digue, the big outer breakwater of Cherbourg harbour, were proving obstinate, he took PT-510 with PT-521 in company to try and quell them with machinegun fire. From ranges as close as 150 yards and drawing a deluge of 88-mm shells down in its vicinity, Bulkeley's boat had to circle the damaged PT-521, laying a smokescreen while repairs were made. Next day, the forts eventually capitulated after repeated bombing by aircraft.

Bulkeley's next action was in support of Operation Dragoon, the Allied invasion of southern France in August 1944. Commanding the destroyer *Endicott* and the British gunboat *Aphis* and *Scorab* with a number of PT boats, he controlled the Western Division-

ary Group. (His opposite number in the Eastern Divisionary Group was a certain Lieutenant-Commander Douglas Fairbanks Jr.) While bombarding the coast near La Ciotat in order to mislead the enemy about the real invasion point, *Endicott* intercepted and sank the German ships *Capriola* and *Ninet Allah*, the first an ex-Italian corvette and the second a former Egyptian armed yacht. After this action Bulkeley's force rescued 200 survivors.

Bulkeley's other awards included the Navy Cross, two Army Distinguished Service Crosses, a Distinguished Service Medal, two Silver Stars, two Legion of Merit awards and the Purple Heart.

In 1961 President Kennedy (who had been a PT Boat officer junior to Bulkeley in the Pacific) appointed him commanding officer of the Guantanamo base in Cuba. It was during the period of rising tension that was later to culminate in the missile crisis of October 1962.

Fidel Castro tried to get the US to abandon the base by, among other measures, building machinegun positions overlooking the perimeter and shutting off the fresh water supply. Bulkeley told reporters that the machine-gun emplacements were useless and referred to them as "Cuban landscaping". When, subsequently, Castro offered to turn the water back on for half an hour each day, Bulkeley told him not to bother — he had already made other arrangements.

Bulkeley originally retired from the Navy in 1974 as president of the Navy Board of Inspection and Survey, but was later retained on active duty and continued in that position until 1988, having completed 55 years' naval service.

He is survived by his wife Hilda and their five children.

DARIO BELLEZZA

Dario Bellezza, Italian poet and novelist, died of an AIDS-related disease in Rome on March 31 aged 51. He was born in 1944.



"BOYS, literature, cats" — these were the self avowed loves of Dario Bellezza, who in both verse and prose explored the often desperate and squalid lives of young homosexuals, preying or being preyed upon, on the streets of Rome. Like the heterosexual Alberto Moravia, whom he first admired and later castigated as "bourgeois", the city of Rome and the ceaseless trade in human flesh pined on its pavements in the very sinews of his work. But unlike Moravia, and instead like Pier Paolo Pasolini, whose fate — sordidly battered to death by a reluctant pick-up in a Rome parking lot — he managed to avoid, the homosexual component of that trade is germane. For Pasolini, Bellezza was simply "il miglior poeta".

Bellezza gained an entry into literary life when, on impulse on a day in 1965, he knocked on the door of the writer Enzo Siciliano, brandishing a typescript. Profoundly impressed by what he read, Siciliano introduced the young writer to the novelist Elsa Morante (who was for a time the wife of Alberto Moravia) and later to Moravia himself. Later he met Pasolini. These introductions opened the pages of Moravia's periodical *Nuovi Argomenti* to him, and it was there that his first, highly explicit, poems were published.

There was something self-consciously "naughty" about these, with their use of the Italian equivalents of four-letter words to describe Bellezza's amorous experiences. Yet when Bellezza's first novel, *L'innocenza* (Innocence) was published in 1970, it surprised readers by the chastity and restraint of its language. Nino, a 15-year-old orphan boy, comes home from boarding school to find that his only relations, three aunts, have disappeared. From then on he is left to wander through a Rome whose streets and piazzas have taken on the surreal quality of one of de Chirico's urban landscapes.

The influence of both Moravia and Pasolini could be seen in this. Indeed, to the self contradictory mind of Pasolini (known far too exclusively in this country for his notoriety as the maker of films such as *120 Giorni di Sodoma*, and not enough for his provoking poetry and novels) Bellezza's

work, steeped as it was in teasing paradoxes, was particularly congenial. And yet it was the Perugian poet Sandro Penna, whose taste for biting, malicious gossip he shared, with whom he had the greatest affinity. Like Penna, too, he preferred the company of his fanciulli (lads) to that of writers and critics.

L'innocenza was followed by *Lettere da Sodoma* (1972, *Letters from Sodoma*), again a carefully crafted and obviously "literary" performance.

Bellezza's first collection of poems was *Inveniva e Lascivioses* (1971, *Invectives and Lasciviousness*), a volume which immediately set him apart from most of his contemporaries. In marked contrast with what is recklessly suggested by the title, the tone is one of almost Calvinistic moral severity.

Nevertheless, Bellezza's plain, unadorned words, explore an abyss of spiritual suffering. The following is characteristic:

Dio! Non attendo che la morte. Ignoro il corso della storia. So solo la bestia che è in me e la tua.

(God! I only wait for death. I am ignorant of the course of history. I know only the beast which is in me and barks.)

When Bellezza published his next novel *Il carnefice* (The Executioner) in 1973, critics were aware of a greater simplicity and directness in his approach. The work appeared to have gained from the greater freedom of his poetry, and turned its back on the conscious polish of the earlier novels. In its claustrophobic, self-indulgent eroticism it invited comparison with the *Cena Trimalchionis* of Petronius, although the geniality and good humour of the latter was never one of Bellezza's fortes.

Il carnefice presented a garish and compelling — if morbidly Kafkaesque — account of a world populated by drug addicts and slaves to sensuality. Yet, in keeping with Bellezza's early, innate Calvinism, the characters in the book are persecuted by two mysterious moral agents, executioners who represent the *carnefice* of the title.

If, unlike Penna or Cavafy (the greatest of the century's homosexual poets), Bellezza failed to transcend his own lavishly sado-masochistic world, within his genre he was undoubtedly a complex and haunted writer.

Certainly he never sought to glamorise either his lifestyle or his condition. A few days before his death, he said of his fate: "Il mio Aids, punizione di Dio."

PEARL PLEYDELL-BOUVERIE

Pearl Pleydell-Bouverie, mother of Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, died on April 10 aged 80. She was born on January 6, 1895.

PEARL PLEYDELL-BOUVERIE was the widow of the 2nd Lord Montagu of Beaulieu. Her first husband was thirty years her senior and, when he died in 1929, he left his young widow to run a large estate, as well as bringing up a young family, single-handed. She rose to the challenge magnificently.

She also, from the age of ten, kept a diary, noting down her impressions of two world wars, numerous foreign trips and her life as stewardess of Beaulieu with a marvellous and witty eye. This meant that much later in life, she was "discovered" by historians. Earlier this year, she could be seen in a recent television interview, sitting bolt upright and discussing very fluently

the hazards of the early days of motoring.

Alice Pearl Crake was the daughter of a major in the Rifle Brigade. One of her earliest memories was as a five-year-old, waving a tiny Union Jack to celebrate the relief of Mafeking. Her father died when she was young, and she was brought up, as a result, to be more sensible of financial matters than some of her peers. While her friends were visiting couturiers in Paris, she found a local dressmaker to copy the fashions. She was educated at private school in London and came out in 1913. She was ignorant of world politics as a girl having led, in her words, a "spoilt" life. But she recorded in her diary the following year reading the "sad" news that Archduke Francis Ferdinand had been assassinated.

The war changed her life irrevocably as friend after friend was killed. One of these

was Harry Cubitt, eldest son of Lord and Lady Ashcombe, to whom she was unofficially engaged, and who fell on the Somme. At the beginning of the war, Pearl was living with her aunt and uncle at Crathorne Hall in Yorkshire. Their house was turned into a convalescent home and Pearl, working as a VAD, helped to make the beds and to prepare food for the soldiers. One day she saw from her window a zeppelin being shot down in the sea off Hartlepool. Later in the war she returned to London and found work as a filing clerk in the War Office, working in intelligence.

In 1920 she visited the South of France with her mother, and there met her first husband, the recently-widowed 2nd Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, who was staying in the same hotel. She became his second wife in August that year at St Margaret's, Westminster.

The second baron was a motoring enthusiast and actively involved, through his seat in the House of Lords, with improving road conditions for cars. He drove his wife (who learnt to drive) in a Rolls-Royce across Europe, Persia and Palestine, and in 1922 over the frontier into India. This coincided with the visit of the Prince of Wales (the future King Edward VIII), and Pearl sat next to the Prince at dinner when she was staying with the Earl of Reading, then Viceroy of India.

In England she became an accomplished hostess. She loved sailing (being the founder of the Beaulieu River Sailing Club in 1931) and raced during Cowes Week with King George V in his yacht *Britannia*. He presented her with a brooch to thank her. Queen Mary was not so enthusiastic about boats, and would spend time quietly at Beaulieu, to get away from the crowds.

The 2nd baron died in 1929, leaving Pearl with four children under the age of eight to bring up alone, and to run the estate until her son Edward could legally inherit at the age of 25. The estate — which had been in the family since the 16th century — was vast, consisting of more than 10,000 acres. Fortunately, Pearl had with her a very able agent, Captain Harry Widnell, and the support of the trustees.

She proved to be methodical and conscientious in all business dealings, and coped well, being aided by the high regard in which she was held by the local people. She could remember the names of all the families on the estate — not because she felt she ought, but because she was genuinely interested in other people's lives. In 1930 she succeeded her husband as a Beaulieu church warden, and was still active in her post until last year. This made her — with 65 years' service — probably the longest serving warden in the Church of England.

In 1936 she married Captain the Hon. Edward Pleydell-Bouverie, brother of the 7th Earl of Radnor, whom she had met briefly in India in 1922. They had a son the following year. Soon after their marriage, he was appointed commander of the royal steam



yacht *Victoria and Albert*. Occasionally King George VI and his Queen and the two young princesses would visit Beaulieu for picnics on the beach, or in the New Forest.

During the war a number of houses on the estate were used by the SOE, and Beaulieu also became the centre of local air-raid and Red Cross operations. Pearl Pleydell-Bouverie co-ordinated affairs while her

husband was at sea. The local hospital supply depot was stationed in her drawing room, and she found accommodation for young evacuees from the bombing of Portsmouth. In 1951, a few months before she relinquished stewardship of the estate to her son Edward, her second husband died, and she moved to the Lodge on the Beaulieu estate.

She was, initially, not too impressed by her son's growing collection of vintage cars, which were originally housed in the hall of Palace House. "I was frightened by the smell of petrol."

She spent her last half-century immersed in work for local organisations: the Women's Institute, the British Legion, the Girl Guides. At the age of 90, she was still insisting on running meals-on-wheels to people who were some years her junior. She continued to entertain and to go to parties, and visited Texas every year, where one daughter had settled and where she had many American friends. But her main interest was in her rapidly expanding family of grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

She tried, as far as possible, to ignore old age and found the last few months of her life irritating, because she was unable physically to do the things she wanted. But her mind remained clear until almost the very end. She was determined to attend a church service this Easter, but, sadly, was prevented by her final illness.


Pearl Pleydell-Bouverie is survived by three daughters and one son from her first marriage, and by her son from the second.

PERSONAL COLUMN

Services, Gifts, Announcements, Trustee Acts, Public Notices, Animals in Need, Your Will, Harrods Spring Piano Fortnight.

London Public Gardens, On This Day April 13, 1912, The writer's opinions on the differences between gardens and parks may strike one as a trifle specious.

*First Telecom charges shown are weekend rates inclusive of VAT and access charges to our London exchange based upon British Telecom local weekend rate of 1.56p per minute inclusive of VAT. Mercury spins shown is basic residential economy rate inclusive of VAT. Prices quoted correct as of January 1996.



Gaby Roslin: Her new chat show. Ch 4, 9pm
Film of the week: *A Passage to India*, today, BBC2, 4.10pm

The Levington DIFFERENCE

I LOVE PLANTING UP TREES & BASKETS & CONTAINERS THIS TIME OF THE YEAR

سنة ١٤١٧

SATURDAY APRIL 13 1996

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GOING OUT



A new guide to arts and events nationwide

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WEEKEND

THE TIMES SATURDAY APRIL 13 1996

BABY BISTROS: THE NEW FRENCH REVOLUTION

by Kate Muir

This is not just a crisis — this is a revolution," announces Claude Lebey, France's equivalent of Egon Ronay. As with the last French revolution, blood must be spilt, and lined up before the guillotine are the aristocrats of cuisine, the grand chefs of Paris.

M Lebey, the Robespierre of gastronomy, is storming the *ancien régime* of restaurants stiff with etiquette and obscenely priced. He is leading the countercharge of the baby bistros — small restaurants opened in the 1990s by fine chefs — which are winning custom with their moderate prices and innovative cooking. While many of France's prestigious restaurants lie half-empty, the modern bistros have two-week waiting lists.

All around, the grand stars of the *Michelin Guide* are falling. Pierre Gagnaire's three-star restaurant in St Etienne was forced to close last month through lack of custom. La Tour d'Argent — a Paris landmark overlooking Notre Dame since 1582 — lost its third Michelin star last week. The chefs of La Tour d'Argent and the two-star Crillon are being investigated in a bribery scandal. Worst of all, the renowned Maxim's was demoted by the *Gault-Millau Paris Guide* from four toques (chef's hats) in its heyday to *none at all*.

Haute cuisine is suffering from a mouldering malaise. Food critics such as M Lebey say culinary excess and the days of "Let them eat cake" are over. The people have had enough cake and want bread, preferably wholemeal and at sensible prices.

M Lebey's guides to restaurants and bistros are to Paris what the *Zagat* guide is to New York — indispensable and direct — or the *Michelin Guide* in this country. M Lebey himself is very much a gentleman, prone to properly long socks and well-cut jackets. He operates from an office overlooking the Parc Monceau, supplied with fine paintings and strong espresso. He is, without doubt, a man of discerning tastes.

His words can seal a restaurant's fate, either way. His present philosophy is this: "There was a golden age of restaurants in France when people went to eat well without even thinking of the price. Now they have become money-conscious like the Americans, and today there is no place for restaurants costing £60 to £100 a head. A few of the great three-star restaurants costing about £130 pounds a head will survive, as not just a culinary but a dramatic experience like going to the theatre, but that's it."

The symbolic battleground of the revolution is Maxim's, probably Paris's — and the world's — most famous restaurant. It opened on the Rue Royale in 1893 to cater to hansom cab drivers waiting on the nearby Place de la Concorde. A waiter called Maxim took over the business and turned the restaurant into the essential schmoozing and dining place for the aristocracy and the demi-monde.

Maxim's Art Nouveau wood panelling, stained glass ceilings and inlaid brass clocks surround banquettes previously occupied by Edward VII, Maria Callas (very fond of the *por-au-feu*), the Duke and Duchess of Windsor (who ordered their game rare), Aristotle Onassis and Charlie Chaplin, the only man allowed entry without proper evening dress. The specialities were turtle

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INSIDE STORY



IN: the relaxed L'Epi Dupin, and chef François Pasteau

Continued from page 1
soup and Merry Widow pan-
cakes.

Now those decadent days
are over. M Lebey says:
"Maxim's has lost its soul." In
response, Maxim's brought in
a new chef, but at 62 he was
considered to be old blood
rather than new.

At this point the battle
became public, and rather
violent. It was fought by
means of open letters in the
pages of *Le Figaro*. M Lebey
struck the first blow in a letter
to Pierre Cardin, fashion de-
signer, logo salesman and
owner of Maxim's. "If you
want Maxim's to become, once
again, a true Parisian institu-
tion, you must offer relatively
classic, perfect cooking, with
good wines at good prices, for
£45 for lunch and £60 for
dinner," prescribed M Lebey.

A scandalised M Cardin
snapped back: "Maxim's will
never become 'une gargote' —
a rather grotty neighbour-
hood restaurant, with a steady
daily clientele.

Maxim's makes it quite
clear if you are the wrong sort
of clientele, as we discovered
last week. We got a reservation
an hour before lunch with
no trouble at all and, when we
arrived, Maxim's was half
empty. Of course, we had
forgotten about the rules for
proper dress — suits and ties.
My companion did his best by
borrowing my velvet scarf
and wearing it cravat-style.
The maître d' spotted his
guilty manner immediately
and blocked our way. "What
sort of trousers, exactly, is
Monsieur wearing?" he said,
peering down at his khaki
chinos. The trousers were
rumpled, but not jeans, so they
passed muster. He was not

fooled by the scarf. A basket of
bow and regular ties was
proffered, and we sheepishly
followed the maître d' — who
reminded my companion
strongly of his headmaster —
into the restaurant.

We were placed side by side
on a banquette in the "omni-
bus" section, so we stared out
at the diners on the opposite
wall. It was rather like being
on the Tube, except everyone
else seemed to be at least 70. It
was by no means a hip and
happening Parisian scene.

At last our waiter arrived
with the card with the serious
numbers: the salad was £19,
the quail egg and caviar starter
was £57, and main courses
hovered around £35. The veg
were £10.50. He greeted our
choices (the cheapest) with an
appropriately servile: "Très
bien, très bien." For fun, we
asked for the wine list, and irri-
tated the sommelier by ponder-
ing a Pétus 1955 Pomerol at
£1,307 before settling for a glass
of house white.

The food, I have to say, was
delicious. The atmosphere —
literally — was the problem.
We were just tucking into de-
licate medallions of fish in a cou-
lis of langoustines and basil
when five fat businessmen at
the next table simultaneously
lit up five fat Havana cigars.

For roughly the price of the
salad at Maxim's, I can have a
three-course *prix fixe* dinner at
my local bistro, L'Epi Dupin,
while breathing and dressing
freely. The menu there: fresh
tagliatelle with salmon in basil
and garlic; fillet of sea bream
with mushrooms and virgin
olive oil; soufflé crêpe with
lemon flambé in vodka.

Indeed, M Lebey made
L'Epi Dupin his bistro of the
year, in his new category of
"les bistros modernes des
cuisiniers maitres" — bistros
with smart, modern cooking.
At under £40 a head and often
half that, they are the boom

OUT: the palatial Les Ambassadeurs. The new *bons vivants* want lower prices and less formal surroundings and are voting with their feet

town for the new *bons vivants*.

Many of France's two and
three-star Michelin chefs antici-
pated this trend and started
opening baby bistros. There
are 19 in Paris alone, a few in
the provinces, opened by celeb-
rity chefs such as Michel Ros-
tang, Jacques Cagna and Guy
Savoy. The staffing costs are
much cheaper, and the savings
is passed to the customer.

Curiously, it is the same
people that go to the baby bis-
tro twice a week and occasion-
ally to the grand restaurant
which owns it. People who want to wear a
cashmere pullover and jeans,
not a suit," M Lebey says. He
also acknowledges that today's
customers are not merely in-
timidated but irritated by a
flurry of servile men in tail-
coats hovering at their table.

They prefer a convivial, re-
laxed atmosphere.

Naturally, this change in
popular taste is not merely a
crisis for restaurateurs, but for
the French nation: *la*
gastronomie is part of the
patrimoine and taken most
seriously. There have been

soul-searching debates in the
press and protests by worried
chefs under the Eiffel Tower.
Even the culture minister,
Philippe Douste-Blazy, has be-
come involved, meeting M
Gagnaire to discuss his three-
star failure.

The problem is that the
eating habits of the French
have changed utterly over the
past 30 years. In 1965, the
average Frenchman spent two
and a half hours at the table
each day. Now he gobbles
three meals in an hour and 20
minutes. No wonder the eco-
nomic soufflé has collapsed,
because the great restaurants
are still catering for the past
rather than the present.

Jean-Claude Vrinat of the
three-star restaurant Taille-
vent admits: "Frankly, we
have had things too easy for
the past three decades. We
have to understand that the
good days were the exception,
not the rule. The French
superiority complex is over.
Now is the time for people to
begin striving again."

Insider's Guide to Paris
page 21

PARIS: WHAT'S IN AND WHAT'S OUT

OUT

Maxim's
Reminiscent of an expensive wine which
turns out to be pretty ordinary when opened
and full of sediment. Worth checking out the
wonderful Art Nouveau decor if someone
else is paying. Dress code draconian, food
pleasant. Clientele past their prime.
33 Rue Royale (00 33 1 42 65 27 94).

Les Ambassadeurs

Palatial room overlooking the Place de la
Concorde. This was where Claudia Schiffer
and David Copperfield got engaged, but
that hip moment has passed. There is a
Fr340 (£45) lunch menu for the "poor"
during the week. Foie gras with fig purée;
lobster medallions; marinated veal slices
with a sauce of asparagus and morille
mushrooms; Gewürztraminer sorbet.
Hôtel de Crillon, 10 Place de la Concorde
(00 33 1 44 71 16 16).

La Tour d'Argent

An institution more than a restaurant, with
an incomparable view over the Seine to Notre
Dame. For those Japanese and Americans
who can still afford Fr1,000 (£133) a head, the
menu is rich and old-fashioned: three
emperors' foie gras; Tour d'Argent duck
(cooked in blood); crêpes Belle Époque. Has a
fixed price lunch at Fr375 (£50). Lost its third
Michelin star this year.
15-17 Quai de la Tourneille.
(00 33 1 43 54 23 31).

IN

L'Epi Dupin

The *Lebey Guide*'s bistro of the year,
serving three courses and cheese for Fr153
(£20). Down a side street near the Bon
Marché store and rather cramped. Book at
least a week ahead, more for weekends, in
order to experience the tuna pissaladière —
the weird stuffed apple, sliced potato and
stem ginger starter — and the chestnut crêpe
soufflé.
11 Rue Dupin (00 33 1 42 22 64 56).

Les Bookinistes

One of chef Guy Savoy's baby bistros, it is
named after the little bookstalls opposite
along the Seine. Modern decor, trendy
lighting and superb menu for Fr160 (£21) at
dinner. Camellions of ratatouille with cori-
ander; fish with leek confit and artichoke
purée. Only problem is too many tourists.
33 Quai des Grands-Augustins
(00 33 1 43 25 45 94).

Shozaa

Opened this year, and specialises in fusion
food — French products cooked Japanese-
style. Run by Japanese distillers, with a
French former model fronting the house, it
offers consommé of warm foie gras,
crunchy, lightly-sugared lamb, foie gras,
11 Rue de la Tremoille (00 33 1 47 23 37 32).

Campagne et Provence

A simple interior like a Provence dining
room, a quiet place with loud food such as
chickpea blinis with crab; peppers and
anchovies; crispy sea snails with parmesan
and tomato confit.
25 Quai de la Tourneille
(00 33 1 43 54 05 17).

L'Appart

Haunt of fashion designers and models, this
deliciously pretentious restaurant is sup-
posed to be like a cosy-but-tasteful apartment.
You can choose to dine in the book-lined
study, the salon or the kitchen. The food is
New-York-style French — old favourites
trendied up like brandade de morue (baked
salt cod) with a red pepper coulis.
9 Rue Colisée (00 33 1 53 75 16 34).

L'Arpège

Bagged its third Michelin star while
everyone else was dropping them, this is a
modern streamlined place. Main courses hit
up to £30 apiece, but there is a fixed price
lunch at Fr350 (£46). Sole stuffed with
ginger; lamb with grapefruit zest and mint
and sweet stuffed tomatoes for dessert.
Service can be a little slow.
84 Rue de Varenne (00 33 1 45 51 47 33).

In the
pecking
order

Feather report

IT WAS very agreeable the
other morning to see the old-
fashioned sight of some rooks
and jackdaws feeding in a
field with some cows. (Of
course, it is the cow that is
about to become the old-
fashioned element.)

The rooks were walking
about sedately, poking their
beaks deep in the grass, while
the jackdaws were moving
more briskly, picking up in-
sects that had been disturbed
by the cows' feet.

The rooks were not quarrel-
ling, but it is known that there
is a "pecking order" in these
rook flocks, which determines
who gives way when two birds
are after the same morsel.
Large female rooks are particu-
larly tough with smaller
ones. Up to a point, this bene-
fits the weaker bird as well as
the stronger, because no time
is wasted in squabbling.

In fact, there were probably
very few female rooks in the
field, because by now most of
them are sitting on eggs. The
males feed them on the nest,
and there was a steady traffic
of birds between the field and
a rookery half a mile away.
Actually all rooks look rather
masculine, because they have
loose feathers on their thighs
like black plus-fours.

I wandered over to the rook-
ery, in a mixed wood, with
some of the nests in oaks,
some in Scots pine trees. There



The rook sedate

was an explosion of protesting
cawing from the treetops at
the sight of me, but the rooks
are fairly safe up there. How-
ever, there was a mysterious
report recently of rooks chas-
ing off bats at dusk.

There have been some enor-
mous rookeries: in 1945, 6,985
nests were counted in a rookery
at Hanton Castle, Aberdeenshire. Currently, the British
rook population seems to be
steadily at about 850,000 pairs.

As for the jackdaws, with
their curious pale grey eyes,
they were still flying off from
the field in couples. They have
chosen their nest-sites, in holes
in old trees or buildings, but
they will not lay for another
few weeks. At present, when
they are not foraging, they just
sit together in close, tender-
looking pairs.

DERWENT MAY

What's about birds — listen
for returning blackbirds singing in
woods and gardens. Twitwits — a
lesser sparrow at Tytenhanger Pitt,
Herefordshire; lesser yellowlegs at
Richmond Park, Cheshire; sub-
alpine warbler at Portland Bill,
Dorset. Details from Birdline 0891
700222. Calls cost 40p a minute,
cheap rate, 50p at other times.

IN THE MAGAZINE

Frances Bissell's
recipes for
bringing home
the flavour
of Paris
PAGE 79

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Try two in a bed for double pleasure

Cross-breeding plants is easy and the results can be colourfully satisfying, says Stephen Anderton

I believe in arranged marriages for plants. Good things can be achieved by putting a beautiful couple in the same bed. If the union is blessed, the offspring will combine the finer attributes of each parent.

Of course, serious growers of roses and fruit will always stay with controlled artificial insemination, applying the pollen of one parent by hand to another to produce the required length of bud, disease resistance or keeping qualities.

But there are many plants which will cross-breed with charming results just by being planted side by side in a bed. If they are fast breeders and can produce the next generation in a year or two, it matters less if the breeding is not accurately controlled.

Poppies are easy to cross-breed. Part of my vegetable patch is given over to the annual opium poppy, *Papaver somniferum*. The plants are mostly doubles, but nevertheless fertile, and splendidly promiscuous. From a forest of pale, grey-green succulent stems come masses of heavily double flowers of scarlet, crimson and darkest purple. They cut beautifully for indoors, but last only briefly.

The time to cut poppies is just as the drooping, fat, globular buds show a streak of colour along the side. Cut them into a vase fast, or they will wilt. If the stems are long, first dip the bottom 2in-3in of

the stem into a pan of boiling water for a few seconds.

Poppies will last for a couple of days when in water, the heads gradually pulling upright, the green halves of the buds splitting open to reveal a confusion of crumpled taffeta-like material — rather like a snake swallowing a flamenco dancer whole.

An open flower will last perhaps a day, after which it drops its petals in a flurry of scarlet or purple. Decadence was never so sweet.

A couple of years ago I was given the pale-pink double form, which has joined the others in the opium den. The pink has crossed with the purples to produce some dusky plum colours in single and double form. They look wonderful; just like a softer version of that invasively fashionable, dusky-plum form of oriental poppy, *Papaver orientalis* 'Patty's Plum'.

From such a hotbed of colour, progeny is not entirely predictable, but it is safe to assume that you will get a degree of continuity.

I tag the most promising flower heads and save the seed for making discrete colonies of colour in the main part of the garden. If the colours are mixed it is easy to pull out the misfits from a single-colour colony.

In the vegetable patch, there is no hope of ever controlling the orgy of miscegenation, but all the spectrum of colours



The annual opium poppy, *Papaver somniferum*, is splendidly promiscuous, producing masses of heavily double flowers

reappears in each succeeding annual crop.

Aquilegias are ideal for mixed marriages. The double pink-and-white 'Nora Barlow' is common and comes true from seed to a high percentage. (If you want the true Nora, beware of buying her

out of flower, because so often she is sold from seed-grown plants which may not come true.) But put Nora with some randy old-fashioned aquilegias and she really lets her hair down. Hybrid progeny seed themselves all around, but still to a large degree with Nora's

double flower. Unlike the large-spurred McKana hybrid aquilegias, the 'Nora Barlow' types are not flamboyant in flower, but they make up in charm and in quantity.

There are few things so much fun for gardeners as seeing a whole mixed litter of little Barlows — doubles, semi-doubles and singles of pink, mauve, white and purple, presided over by their pink-and-white mother, Nora. They look good with the dark purple foliage of *Cotinus coggygria* 'Royal Purple' of the purple form of common sage, *Salvia officinalis* 'Purpurascens'.

The 'Pacific Coast' irises are another group of crossbreeders, so promiscuous that botanists despair of the true species surviving in the wild. In gardens they show no more restraint and will hybridise with delightful results. The late Ivor Knowles, of Sevenoaks, Kent, named several varieties, such as 'Lavender Lil' and 'Blue Ballerina', which he had produced by planting promising varieties or iris innumerate and douglasiana side by side, growing on the offspring, and selecting and naming the best.

Good gardening has to be ruthlessly elitist. 'Pacific Coast' irises take a few years to flower from seed and, while

most of the progeny from an arranged marriage may be pleasant, it is necessary to smother at birth those plants which are less than promising, lest the garden fill up with mediocrities.

Anyone breeding plants — especially longer-lived plants — however casually, must be prepared to select mercilessly if any sort of consistency and quality is to be achieved.

A few years ago I picked up some seed from *Paeonia delavayi*, the red-flowered, fruit-cake-scented tree peony. Five years later I know the resulting shrubs to be hybrids, crosses between red *P. delavayi* and the yellow *P. delavayi* var. *ludlowii*. The numerous flowers are a pleasant muddle of shades between yellow and orange, and perhaps 2in across.

I was pleased with these until I saw a specimen of what must be the same hybrid parentage in a garden in Nottinghamshire, with flowers 3in-4in across, which were more in scale with the dramatic foliage of the plant, and performed.

I now realise that mine should go on the bonfire. It is important to be more selective with a permanent, long-term shrub than with easy-come, easy-go poppies. Permanent respect has to be harder earned.

GARDEN ANSWERS



STEPHEN ANDERTON replies to readers' letters

Q My eucryphia tree is about 12ft high. This winter frost, and possibly salt spray, have browned most of the top and middle leaves. The lower leaves under a wall still have some green on them. Should I leave it alone or cut it down to the green part? — Mrs J.M. Currie, Milngavie, Glasgow.

A Be patient and wait until the tree is growing properly to decide what is alive or dead. You can prune the dead away in May, or even June. It will grow upwards again but not so neatly. You should expect damage to evergreen eucryphias in a bad winter. The deciduous species, *E. glutinosa*, is hardier, but none of these South American summer-flowering trees is totally hardy.

Q Low-growing conifers are starting to spread out over a path alongside my house. How do I prune them and what? — G. Davies, Winchester, Hampshire.

A Little and often is the best recipe. Reduce the spread by thinning back the branches, trying not to leave any stumps or brown, inner foliage showing. You can do this at almost any time of year, and cuts of less than half an inch in diameter will do no harm. Large stumps of branches will not sprout again. The more prostrate junipers are easier to keep in place with regular cutting back than those with low, but arching, growth, such as *Juniperus x media* 'Pfitzeriana'. Their grace is destroyed by taking off the arching tips.

Q Two years ago I planted two apple trees which fruited well, but each year squirrels have eaten the entire crop, even biting through plastic netting to get to them. What can I do to stop this? — R. Holyoak, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands.

A Nothing short of a fine metal cage will stop a determined grey squirrel. But not all squirrels are partial to apples; it may be that the next generation will leave them alone. Control on a single garden is almost impossible, but a group of neighbours can make an effort to cull the squirrels by trapping. (Red squirrels are a protected species, and not a problem.) Fruit trees planted close to houses and away from woodland trees are less likely by squirrels.

Q I have a lovely display of yellow aconites, under shrubs and in all the borders. But where they reach the edge of the

borders, they seed into the gravel paths and look weedy. What can I do to stop this? — Mrs H. Robinson, Ripon, Yorkshire.

A Established aconites are best dug out of paths and replanted or given away. If their presence offends you, or is spoiling a formal scheme, use a residual herbicide on the paths; it should soak into the first 1in-2in of gravel and kill the seedlings as they emerge. Look for something containing diuron or dichlobenil.

Q I have a *Daphne aureomarginata* grown from a cutting. It is in a large pot, flowers profusely in spring and has a superb perfume — but looks like a feather duster on a leafless 2ft stem. When the tip was pinched out, it still only branched at the end. Can I cut it back hard, and why does it lose its lower leaves? — Mrs F.D. Neale, Poole, Dorset.

A I have never seen this plant densely covered with foliage; it is always a fairly scrambling, open affair. Usually plants are bought having been pinched once as a cutting, and subsequent frost damage or the odd irresistibly picked buttonhole flower causing further pinching contrive to make a loose dome rather than a feather duster. *Daphnes* hate hard pruning, so you are stuck with the pompon until it develops a bigger head.



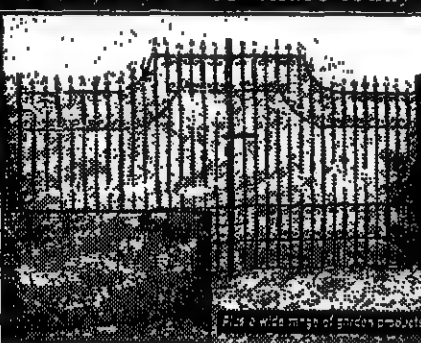
Daphne aureomarginata

would plant it out in a sheltered sunny corner. If anyone has this plant as a dense, well-covered bush, and knows why it is so, I would like to hear about it. If density is all, try *Daphne retusa* or *tangutica*.

Readers wishing to have their gardening problems answered should write to: Garden Answers, Weekend, The Times, 1 Pennington St, London E1 9XN. We regret that few personal answers can be given and that it may not be possible to deal with every request. Advice is offered without legal responsibility. The Times also regrets that enclosures accompanying letters cannot be returned.

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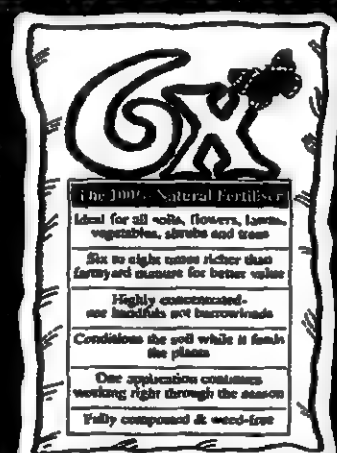
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- Start runner bean plants in 3in pots under glass, for planting out next month.
- Sow outdoor leeks, peas, broad beans, cauliflowers, brussels sprouts, onions, turnips, beetroot and parsnips.
- Cut down the old stems of hardy fuchsias, and feed.
- Sow courgettes, cucumbers and outdoor tomatoes under glass.
- Complete pruning of evergreens, including any hard pruning of holly and yew hedges.
- Lay new lawns, with turf or seed. Repair damaged lawn edges and redefine edges with a half-moon cutter.
- Spray fruit trees as necessary for scab and aphids, avoiding spraying when the flowers are open.
- Sow hardy annuals, such as calendula, nasturtium and cornflowers, where they are intended to flower.



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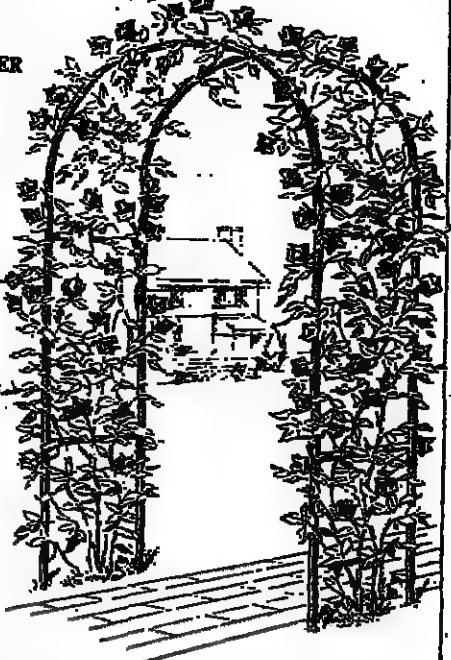
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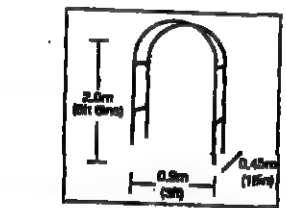
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There wasn't much to see when Crena Watson, a fashion photographer, walked through the door of her new flat: no walls, kitchen, bathroom or central heating, just 4,000 sq ft of space in south London.

Inside, apart from the size and shape of the windows, there was little to suggest that she now owned the former gymnasium and two classrooms of Lavender Hill School in Wandsworth. She bought the first floor flat a year ago and spent three months converting it into a 23ft by 17ft living room, a huge bedroom, bathroom, kitchen and a studio with a mezzanine floor for an office and darkroom. At one time there were 16 builders there.

Redundant schools can make homes of character, Rob Dark, an architect and conservationist, says: "Old schools are usually well built. The brickwork, joinery and decorative features are of a high standard and you can create an attractive environment and get more space for your money than in many modern houses."

Mr Dark also points out that schools are generally well located within the local community, close to shops and stations.

Lavender Hill was one of 500 schools built in the capital by the London School Board between 1870 and 1904. About 300 survive. Local school boards, which were found all over the country, were elected by ratepayers to provide elementary education for the poor.

English Heritage, mindful that architectural history could be lost by closure and demolition, is researching the history of board



Crena Watson in the living room of the flat she created from a shell. The windows are the only clue to the building's former life as a school.

schools with a view to adding to the 43 listed nationwide. "Most are still in educational use. Listing can't keep them open but it can ensure that any future conversion is done sympathetically," says Elaine Harwood, an English Heritage historian.

Lavender Hill School — which is not listed — ended its days in the hands of the Inner London Education Authority as offices and a centre for adult education. Wandsworth council, which took it over in 1990, sold the 1.3 acre site two years ago to the developers Sapcote for £1.36m. Sapcote turned the school, renamed The Village, into 30 flats and sold them for £145,000-£400,000 each. A

book on school developments, *Beacons of Learning*, published last year by SAVE Britain's Heritage, describes The Village as a "shining example of enlightened entrepreneurial conservation".

"What people are buying is a shell," says Ashley Nicholson, a director of Sapcote. "It's up to the occupier to do what they like with the place. Every one is different." He estimates that conversion costs would be between £20,000 and £50,000.

Rob and Barbara Hunter fell in love with a shell of a building too, only theirs was a village school in Cumbria built in 1874. The school, with one high-ceilinged room for juniors and one for infants, was closed in 1988 because of falling numbers.

The couple put in a successful sealed bid to Cumbria County Council. "The planning authorities in the Lake District National Park stipulated that the outside

had to stay as near as possible to the original," Mr Hunter says.

Inside, the school has been transformed, although with deference to its character and age. Eighteen months of work produced five bedrooms, a kitchen, a sitting room on a mezzanine floor and a dining room. "We wanted to keep the feeling of space. There's no point in buying a building like this and splitting it into small boxes," says Mrs Hunter, who did not want to disclose the cost.

The couple's advice to anyone considering such a conversion is to choose an architect who is sensitive to the building. Emma Phillips at SAVE agrees: "If the building is converted, then carrying out a good scheme which retains the overall feeling is of prime importance. You should work with an architect who has experience of historic buildings." She estimates conversion costs of village schools to be £50,000 upwards.

Over the past 12 years 350 small rural schools have closed in England. Other educational community uses can often be found for them so by no means all end up as homes.

The organisation ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) is in the middle of piloting a scheme

in five counties (Buckinghamshire, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Essex and Cheshire) to encourage greater community use of small schools.

A number of converted schools are at present on the market. The Old School House at Rushford, near Thetford in Norfolk is for sale at £195,000 (Savills, 01473 226191) and there is the Old National School at Sampford Spiney, Yelverton, Devon (Strutt Parker, 01392 215631). Offers over £150,000.

Meanwhile Sapcote has just started the conversion of Latchmere Primary School in Wandsworth, for which the company paid £2.25 million. The buildings will be converted into 23 shell flats and eight houses, and 16 new, fully-fitted houses will be built in the grounds. Prices will range from £100,000 to £400,000.

CHRISTIAN DYMOND

● *Beacons of Learning* is available from SAVE Britain's Heritage, 68 Battersea High Street, London SW11 3HEX. £11.50 (071) 238 3336.

● ACRE, Somerford Court, Somerford Road, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 1TW (01285 653471).

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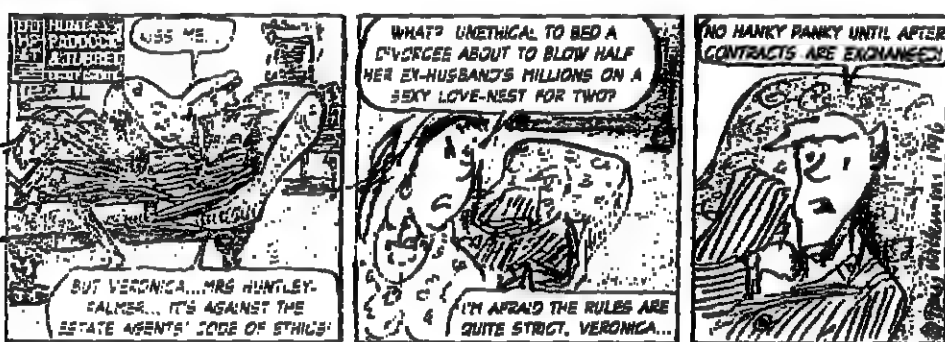
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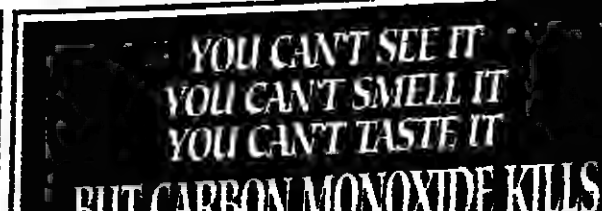
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SHOPPING

9

Confused by the range of cameras on sale? Tim Wapshott snaps off a few rolls of film so he can point buyers in the right direction

To put you in the picture

Today we have the technology, in theory at least, to make sophisticated, easy-to-use cameras to suit every ability and pocket, starting with disposable cameras for less than a fiver. They are all worthy descendants of probably the first camera for amateurs, the Box Brownie — cost \$1 — which was unveiled 100 years ago by Eastman Kodak.

Between now and the summer holidays camera shops do some of their best business, and buyers need to decide which model will suit their pockets and which size will comfortably fit into it.

James Gardner, buyer for Selfridges' camera department, which last year sold more than 6,000 cameras made by 21 manufacturers, says: "Camera size should be a consideration. If it is too bulky, you're unlikely to take it out with you."

Then decide what pictures you want to take. If it's "happy snaps", a basic set-focus, auto-wind 35mm compact from £30 will do. Spending a little more will get you a more solid 35mm compact, probably including a built-in zoom lens.

However, compact cameras with zoom lenses have drawbacks; although they are good for head-and-shoulders shots, the pictures rarely enlarge without loss of quality.

If you might want quality enlargements, consider stepping up a league to the 35mm SLR (single lens reflex) camera, costing from £350 for an auto-focus version.

Auto-focus uses a beam to measure the distance between the camera lens and the spot on which you are focusing, so your picture will be sharp. An SLR also gives you many new

options, including the ability to swap lenses from wide-angle to telephoto and it will probably have manual override facilities.

I tested a selection of cameras using the same type of film in each, and the same developing process at *The Times*, based on Mr Gardner's bestselling models, to see whether price still makes a difference. My supermodels, photographed on a cloudy afternoon outside Hertford House, in central London, home of the Wallace Collection, were Young's the brewers' dray horses, Wandle Mascot and Wandle Buster. The cameras had to be easy to use, with fixed or auto-focus, and widely available. I also tested cameras suitable for children aged under ten.

The Kodak Fun Gold disposable camera (£8.99 with flash); easy to use but the pictures, though in focus, were too dark.

The Kodak Star AutoFocus compact (£39.99); easy to use, but the print quality varied — some too dark, some faded at the edge but all in focus.

The Yashica T4 (£139.99); a compact with built-in flash. The pictures were too dark but perfectly focused.

Results from the Canon Sureshot 70 Zoom compact (£159), with zoom capabilities and built-in flash, were slightly over-exposed but with excellent clarity.

The Olympus MJU Zoom 105 QD (£269.99) compact, with the biggest zoom lens, was a sleek, silver dream machine. Excellent results.

The Minolta 500 S1 SLR (£349.99) was the bulky next step up from compacts. It



Wandle Mascot and Wandle Buster stroll into Canon Sureshot 70 Zoom focus (camera inset). Right, a picture of Oliver taken by William with the Polaroid talking camera

handled solidly, but several pictures were under-exposed. At £999.99 for the body alone, the Nikon F90X was the prince of cameras that I tested. It was simple to use, with an expensive-sounding shutter action, and delivered excellent results.

For younger photographers, Mr Gardner suggested Kodak Fun Gold, Kodak Star or Yashica T4. My panel — William, seven, and Oliver, five — tested his recommendations, plus two Polaroid cameras — the lower quality of the prints being offset by instant results.

Of the two Kodaks, neither delivered memorable pictures. The boys found the Yashica easy to use and got good results. Their favourites were

undoubtedly the Polaroids. Oliver liked the chunky Polaroid 636 Talking Camera (£39.99), which plays your own taped messages, such as "Smile" as the pictures are taken, while William preferred the executive lines of the Polaroid Image Elite (£119.99).

But technology never stands still. Appearing in shops soon is a photographic system that Minolta, Nikon, Canon, Kodak and Fuji have developed jointly at a cost of £200 million: the Advanced Photo System (APS). These cameras will use a new type of film in tamper-proof cartridges, fractionally smaller than standard 35mm rolls, and automatic correctional information is stored on a magnetic strip in

the film to enable better dark-room salvaging if things go wrong.

It is too early to know whether the APS gamble will pay off. The cameras (from £60), films, developing and printing will all cost more, but the biggest initial drawback might be the difficulty in finding film stock in far-flung destinations. Mr Gardner comments: "APS is the way photography is going, but it will not do so overnight. The trade believes that APS and 35mm will sell side by side into the next century."

Instant pictures in another form are likely to change the face of consumer photography. Digital cameras will be a growth market and they do away with film altogether.

Pictures are saved electronically and can be transferred to computer disk. You cannot get regular prints but colour pictures can be printed onto paper or incorporated into other computer documents.

Digital cameras give results instantly, enabling you to select the best, deleting others.

The most popular digital camera in the consumer market is the tiny Casio QV-10. With its large, back-lit colour LCD display, it gives surprisingly good results not yet quite as good as prints, even without flash in low light, and stores 96 pictures at a time.

Until now, price has been a big drawback, but that is dropping quickly and imminent newcomers — including Canon, Nikon and Polaroid — might keep the pressure up to keep prices down. Mr Gardner says: "The QV-10 originally cost £799; now it is £699 and unofficially you can get one for £599."

Nor is the novelty of the digital likely to wear off. The flexibility of seeing immediately the picture you have taken on the camera's mini screen and being able to take it again if it isn't quite what you want is the ultimate luxury.

Send for a Kodak photography guide. Main paper, page 19

THE CAMERA I COVE

THERE IS a photograph in a book I have that shows a Vietnamese woman clutching the remains of her husband, which are in a plastic bag bound with string. She is protecting herself and the corpse from the sun with her straw hat. She has forgotten herself in her grief and a strand of saliva forms a link between her and her dead husband.

The photograph was taken by Larry Burrows in 1965 during the Tet Offensive. Three years later, he was killed covering the Vietnam War for *Life* magazine. His Leica — the very camera that took that picture — is the one I covet.

Designed by Oskar Barnack and using perforated film, the "Leica" was introduced in 1925 by Ernst Leitz, the optical manufacturer of Wetzlar, Germany. Its success revolutionised photography, establishing 35mm as the format used to this day. This camera is well engineered, lightweight and simple to use for a professional photographer, but has few of the modern automatic features beloved of the amateur.

The current model, the *Via*, retains much of the original design and feel.

Alfred Eisenstadt used a Leica

to capture forever the sailor kissing the nurse in Time Square on VJ Day in August 1945 which ran on the cover of *Life*. Henri Cartier-Bresson, who helped to establish photo-journalism as an art form, bought his first Leica, his "notebook", in 1933.

For me, the most interesting photographer now using Leica is Ellen von Unwerth, whose uncompromising, erotic photographs of the fashion world are on show in London.

The world record price for a camera is for a Leica — £39,600, paid at Christie's in 1993 for a gold model custom-made for the Sultan Abdel Aziz of Morocco. New Leicas cost about £2,600.

If this price is out of reach, perhaps the best camera to own would be the one that takes the new picture of Lord Leica. I would love it to be a Leica M6 — and in my hands at the time.

GRAHAM WOOD

• The author is picture editor of *The Times* Magazine.

• Ellen von Unwerth exhibition, Hamilton Gallery, 13 Carlo Place, London W1. 0171-499 9493, until April 27

Photographic fact file

Details of local stockists from: Kodak, 01442 61122; Yashica, 01734 31919; Canon, 0800 616417; Olympus, 0171-253 2772; Minolta, 01908 200400; Nikon, 0181-541 4440; Polaroid, 01582 632000; Casio, 0181-450 9131.

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The book covers actual case histories of people who suffered panic and general anxiety problems and how they were able to overcome their problems.

Many people are putting up with troublesome panic attacks, general anxiety and phobias because they are unaware of new treatments and the welcome relief that is now available.

Get all the facts. To order your copy of *How to Overcome Anxieties, Panic Attacks & Phobias* send your name, address and book title with payment (cheque or Visa/Access with expiry date) of £9.95 which includes postage and handling to: **0473-1**, Alfred, nr. Colchester, Essex, CO7 8AP, or telephone their 24 hour order line on 01206 825600 (quoting reference: 0473-1). Allow up to 14 days for delivery. You may return the book any time within three months for a full refund if not satisfied.

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15 CLINICS NATION-WIDE

Discreet alarm of the bourgeoisie

ALONG with tart's knicker blinds, designer water and the personal computer, the Aga-saga arrived in the late 1980s. With its distinctive pastel jacket and rejection of glitz, it ousted the sex 'n' shopping novel, and readers flocked to read them. But there is, perhaps, more cooking in the Aga-saga than a 1990s espousal of domestic values insofar as it fictionalises profound insecurities and crises of confidence. For this is a world where adultery is commonplace and a sustaining morality is in shreds. In short, the message from the shires is one of middle-class angst.

So it is understandable that the plots of these three novels are

Elizabeth Buchan discovers that the Aga-saga for the 1990s is sending out an SOS from the shires, where middle-class marriages and morality melt down in middle age

virtually indistinguishable. Two of them plunge the reader into the queasy eruptions of middle-aged marriages that have been jogging along for too long. The third transplants an infant marriage from the city to the village, busy with its cast of old ladies, witch-bodies and faded squirearchy, is almost a parody but is redeemed by sharp and perspicacious writing.

A *Summer Affair* opens with Nicholas scraping dandruff off his scalp, an example of Swifitian detail that the author often slips in. He is

■ **A SUMMER AFFAIR**
By Amanda Brookfield
Sceptre, £16.99
■ **SEVEN FOR A SECRET**
By Judy Asley
Black Swan, £5.99
■ **THE TORTOISE SHELL**
By Fanny Frewen
Century, £15.99

forty-something, and his ambitions to write are going nowhere, while his energetic wife, Kate, is embarking on a career as a cookery writer, his children are growing up and

Nicholas is falling prey to jealousy and suspicion. Before long, he is behaving very badly. Amanda Brookfield's tussle with the complexities of a marriage has moments of insight and black humour but it is marred by hurried and cluttered prose.

The heroine of *Seven for a Secret* is not a cook but a gifted gardener, but the same situation is apparent. Married for 25 years to the mostly absent Tom, an airline pilot, Heather is horrified to discover that her first husband, a rakish Scottish

laird with whom she eloped out of school, has arrived in the village to film his bestselling novel. Money is not a problem, but having enough does not let you off sharp, sometimes cruel lessons and unwelcome reminders of the past. Judy Asley pilots her plot along at a goodish pace, but the deeper feelings capable of transforming a romp into something more significant only emerge in the last pages.

Slighter and quirkier, *The Tortoise Shell* has the texture and flavour of the lovingly distilled,

whose prose has been allowed onto the page only after a proper gestation.

A genius at advertising copy, Henry Brack has married handsome, successful, nice Jack, who immediately sets about taming his wife by corralling her at Mulberry Cottage in his home village of Tiddingfold. Surprisingly, Henry gives in, abandons her smart metropolitan existence and finds herself transplanted into a community of women who operate by their own rules. Will Henry survive the role of stay-at-home wife? Ninety-five-year-old Mrs Boxendale has her own thoughts on the matter. Sharp as a knife and yet deeply compassionate, Fanny Frewen is an original spirit.

SHORT STORIES

Moody and the blues

■ **THE RING OF BRIGHTEST ANGELS AROUND HEAVEN**
By Rick Moody

Abacus, £9.99
RICK MOODY's short takes are mood pieces. He paints word pictures of the everyday American nightmare, somewhere between Hopper and Rauschenberg. These shards of inconsequential living are nicely constructed, elegantly and wilyly written. Lots of brand names and name dropping. In the long title story, the underbelly of a seedy New York is investigated through a hypnotic description of surfaces. A clever chap, Moody, worth keeping an eye on.

■ **THE CUB-HUNTING SEASON**
By Steve Ferris

Vintage, £8.99
THIS first collection is a bit like a surfeit of ballet, an art form that brings me out in spots. Characters, mainly homosexual, metamorphose into zoo animals, or butterflies, or anything to escape difficult humanity. The selfishness of the characters, to a man, is awesome. The writing is accomplished enough — the menace of Genet tagged to the surreal baroque of Angela Carter — but lacks either the originality of vision.

■ **LEAVE TO STAY**
Edited by Joan Riley and Brian Wood

Vintage, £7.99
BRIAN WOOD is a white New Zealander, Joan Riley a black Jamaican, and they collect stories and poems by migrants in Britain and America. Here are the fears and excitement of arriving in new places as well as the day-to-day problems of living in foreign parts. The writing is as varied as are the nationalities of the contributors. What is not particularly remarked upon is the extent to which "foreigners" enhance the quality of life in their new homes.

■ **SCOTTISH GHOST STORIES**
By James Robertson

Warner, £4.99
MANY of these retellings are derived from Hugh Miller's essential 1835 compilation. James Robertson's versions have all been "researched". He has visited the sites of his hauntings as if this kind of documentation makes the spooky nudgings of the imagination somehow more credible. Familiar stories, such as those of the 17th-century wizard, Major Weir, and the Monster of Glarn, are included as well as little known hauntings up to the present.

GILES GORDON

Neither Romanov, nor an empress

ALMOST 78 years after a squad of half-drunk local Bolsheviks burst into the basement of the Ipatiev House in Ekaterinburg and opened fire indiscriminately on Tsar Nicholas II, his family and servants, scientists at the Home Office Forensic Laboratory this month finally resolved one of the most emotionally charged and politically contentious cases of regicide. Genetic tests have proved beyond doubt that the bones first dug up in secrecy in a muddy wood in 1979 are indeed those of the slain emperor.

The long mystery was solved by DNA matching. If the technique had been available 50 years ago, it would have unmasked one of history's most famous imposters, cut short one of the longest and costliest civil suits German courts have ever heard and avoided years of feuding between more than 40 surviving members of the quarrelsome Romanov family. For

■ **THE QUEST FOR ANASTASIA**
By John Klier

Smith Gryphon, £8.99



Anastasia: murder victim

Anna Anderson, the mysterious woman pulled from a Berlin canal who intrigued and infuriated the world with her claim that she was Anastasia, the Tsar's only surviving daughter, was a fraud. Paranoid, chronically ill, obstinate and by turns reclusive

or self-seeking, she lived a bizarre half-life in courts, sanatoriums, mental asylums and the dilapidated castles of deracinated German and Russian aristocrats, only to die in squalor in America. She survived tuberculosis, the intrusions of prying journalists and the ferocious opposition of the Tsar's nearest relatives as well as the enmity of Lord Mountbatten, who spent huge sums opposing Anderson's claims.

The double mystery is intriguingly unravelled by John Klier. A detective, he has pieced together the latest evidence and writes a compelling, fast-moving account. The Tsar's final hours are grippingly related; but the list of all the Romanovs who befriended Anastasia gets as tedious as the woman herself evidently was. The book is as satisfying as the historic conclusion: the frauds are unmasked, the murdered Tsar finds final rest.

MICHAEL BINYON



Last generation? Statistics on the tiger population are unreliable and the battle to save them may already be lost

Tiger, tiger, burning dim

■ **OF TIGERS AND MEN**
By Richard Ives

Mainstream, £14.99

OBSESSION comes in many guises: sex, power, drugs, gambling. For Richard Ives, an adventurer and wildlife tour-leader, it is none of these. His passion is the tiger. Possessed by the extraordinary charisma of the world's most formidable carnivore, he vows to confront the tiger face to face. So begins his Asian odyssey, an arduous journey from Chitwan in Nepal to the tiger's last strongholds in the heart of Mother India. Here, swaying through the jungle on elephant-back, he hears its deep, guttural groan in the mist of Dudhwa. But he has come too late.

At Ranthambor national park in Rajasthan, a huge male tiger known as Genghis used to prowling the Rajput ruins and catch deer by chasing them into the park's lush-studded lakes. Now, along

with countless others, Genghis has gone, his bones ground up to make tiger wine.

Along the way Ives encounters other tiger fanatics. Men such as "Bilby" Arjan Singh, who became hooked on tigers as a child after reading Jim Corbett's classic *Maneaters of Kumaon*. Singh has spent most of his life hand-raising and releasing tigers and leopards into the wild at Tiger Haven, his home on the edge

of Dudhwa national park. Now, like all the tiger men, he feels disillusioned and betrayed by the way in which Operation Tiger, the international rescue attempt to save India's great cats from extinction, has been allowed to run into the sands.

Official reports reckon there are still between 3,000 and 4,000 tigers in India. The tiger men believe these figures are wildly optimistic. The true figure may be fewer than 700. In Indonesia, where truth is an unknown continent, the government has simply lied

about its tigers. There are supposed to be at least 400, but no more than a few dozen survive.

The same is true of Thailand, where the tigers of Khao Yai, one of the country's wildlife showplaces, have been poached by people working inside the park, who sell the carcasses to a Bangkok restaurant specialising in exotic meats. Ives writes with messianic fervour, but his book is bitter medicine, with no saccharine message of hope to coat the pill. He has journeyed into the future, only to discover that the tiger is leaving us. One day soon, he predicts, the last wild tiger will be born. For a few years more its roar will echo in the night. Then the forests will fall silent for ever.

BRIAN JACKMAN

BOOK NEWS: Hats off to Larry; diplomatic impunity

DEREK GRANGER, at work on an authorised biography of Laurence Olivier, invites any Times readers with letters from the actor or recollections of his life and career to write to him at 82 Palace Gardens Terrace, London W8 4RS (fax 0171-229 3060). "All original correspondence and documents will be treated with the greatest care and returned as soon as possible after being copied," he says.

● **DOUBTLESS** anticipating increased leisure time and a life in the Lords, former Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd has signed a two-book deal with Little, Brown. The first is an as-yet-untitled political thriller and the second a

Olivier papers sought

television tie-in, *Diplomacy in the 20th Century*, which spans the years from 1914 to the Gulf War. Will Hurd take a critical view of the quality of today's diplomacy? "It will be very diplomatic," says his publisher.

● **NICHOLAS EVANS'S** *The Horse Whisperer* has been shortlisted for the Romantic Novel of the Year Award to be announced at London's Café

Royal on April 24, with P. D. James as the guest of honour. Also on the shortlist are *The Red Pavilion* by Jean Chapman, *To Lie with Lions* (Dorothy Dunnett), *Unforgettable* (William Gill), *Misselthwaite* (Susan Moody), *Coming Home* (Rosamund Pilcher) and *Casting Off* (Libby Purves).

● **ACTRESS** Julie Walters is at work on a novel, also bought by Little, Brown. Unsurprisingly, the star of *Educating Rita* and *Buster* draws her inspiration from the thespian world: "It is about two actresses and will be slightly autobiographical, with laughter and tears, but rather more laughter," we are promised.

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THURSDAY

Malcolm Bradbury on John Updike's magisterial new novel, *In The Beauty of the Lilies*; Michael Sissons on Sebastian Faulks's *The Fatal Englishman*; Mark Ridley on Richard Dawkins's *Climbing Mount Improbable*

DORLING KINDERSLEY has been making a name for itself — and some tidy profits — in the expanding CD-Rom market. Now, with neat symmetry, it has reverted to print to explain how the world of multimedia works.

Beautifully and comprehensively illustrated, *Multimedia* covers the past, present and future of the whole field, from monitors to modems, from 3D games to the World Wide Web. The explanatory text is clear, concise, intelligent and, most

importantly, does not talk down to us adults as we struggle to catch up with the technology the young take for granted.

And even if some of it goes over your head, you should pick up enough of the jargon to enable you to talk the same language as your children, or at the very least to be able to call the bluff of the

All roads lead to CD-Rom

"expert" salesmen at your local computer superstore.

There is a splendid section on the future of computer technology — electronic newspapers, automated homes and so on — that will seem impossibly quaint in a few years' time. If you think that all of this technology will eventually drive you mad, don't worry. In the future, when you talk to the walls, the walls will talk back.

PETER INGHAM

The Times/Dillons Bestsellers

HARDBACK				Last No. week weeks	
1	KEN HOM'S HOT WOK BOOK Ken Hom (BBC)	£16.99	1	7	
2	UNRULY QUEEN Flora Fraser (Macmillan)	£20	4	2	
3	GREEN MILE: TWO DEAD GIRLS Stephen King (Penguin)	£12.99	0	1	
4	FIRST KING OF SHANNARA Terry Brooks (Legend)	£12.99	5	3	
5	PRIMARY COLORS Anonymous (Chatto & Windus)	£15.99	2	6	
6	THE RETURN William S. Burroughs (PocketBooks)	£9.99	0	1	
7	MICHELIN FRANCE (Michelin)	£14.50	0	1	
8	HITLER'S WILLING EXECUTIONERS D. J. Golding (Little, Brown)	£30	0	1	
9	EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE Daniel Goleman (Bloomsbury)	£16.99	3	12	
10	THE JESUS PAPYRUS C. P. Thicke & M. d'Ancona (Weidenfeld)	£16.99	0	1	
PAPERBACK				Last No. week weeks	
1	SOPHIE'S WORLD Jessica Gaudier (Phoenix)	£4.99	1	5	
2	TRANSFOTTING Irvine Welsh (Minerva)	£6.99	3	32	
3	GREEN MILE: TWO DEAD GIRLS Stephen King (Penguin)	£1.99	0	1	
4	BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE MUSEUM Kate Atkinson (Black Swan)	£5.99	2	12	
5	OUR GAME John le Carré (Coronet)	£5.99	4	4	
6	ORIGINAL SIN P. D. James (Penguin)	£5.99	5	4	
7	HEMINGWAYS CHAIR Michael Palin (Mandarin)	£5.99	0	1	
8	ACID HOUSE Irvine Welsh (Vintage)	£5.99	7	21	
9	THE RAINMAKER John Grisham (Arrow)	£5.99	6	10	
10	SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS David Guterson (Bloomsbury)	£5.99	8	29	
11	THE BLACK ALBUM Hamid Karzai (Faber & Faber)	£5.99	0	1	
12	MARABOU STORK NIGHTMARES Irvine Welsh (Vintage)	£5.99	12	9	
13	MOO Jane Smiley (Flamingo)	£6.99	10	2	
14	HEART SONGS E. Annie Prosser (Fourth Estate)	£5.99	17	4	
15	THE STATE WE'RE IN Will Hutton (Vintage)	£7.99	9	13	
16	A RUTHLESS NEED Catherine Cookson (Corgi)	£5.99	14	4	
17	A CELESTINE PROPHECY James Redfield (Bantam)	£7.99	19	18	
18	FINGERPRINTS OF THE GODS Graham Hancock (Mandarin)	£6.99	13	7	
19	REGENERATION Pat Barker (Penguin)	£6.99	20	20	
20	SENSE AND SENSIBILITY Jane Austen (Bloomsbury)	£3.99	0	1	

Any book from this list can be ordered from Dillons Mail Order Tel: 0171 636 1577 Fax: 0171 560 7680

TEENAGE FICTION

Friendly bombs

PTTY the authors who write for older children. Apart from keeping up with the trends, they have only a few years to capture an audience. After that, readers move on. "Sadly outgrown," as they used to say in the *Horse & Hound* pony advertisements.

Terry Pratchett, who "writes for anyone old enough to understand", is the witty exception. *Johnny and the Bomb* (Doubleday, £12.99) is his third novel about Johnny Maxwell, the 12-year-old (going on 17) whose strange adventures keep teenagers on the tips of their toes. Here, in company with three mates, plus Kirsty (a sharp-tongued version of the token female), he goes back in time to the Second World War. It is May 1941 and a bomb is about to fall on rural Blackbury, enabling Johnny to remark, "I can remember when it was all buildings". Despite the surface simplicity of Pratchett's language, readers of 12 plus are in for a demanding read.

Give Robert Westall's *Falling into Glory* (Mammoth, £4.99) to a 14 or 15-year-old and do not expect to see it

again until her (or his) entire class has read it — and reread it, with the tears streaming down their cheeks. First published in 1993, it is the story of how Robbie, the school's bright boy and rugby hero, falls in love with his teacher, the entrancing Miss Harris. By 16 or 17, I am told, you may have got all you can out of it. This hot-house of a book set in a period of postwar innocence can be relied on to have a knock-out effect on teenage emotions for generations.

Feelings of guilt and anger which can follow a death are explored in *The Shadow of August* by Sue Welford (OUP, £5.99), but mostly it is a gripping mystery. After her mother's death, 17-year-old Mattie discovers that a lot of things she had been told about her childhood were false. Unravelling her past is painful, but inheriting a house in Cornwall can only be romantic. An imagination stretcher for 14 to 16-year-olds, the novel stops when Mattie has unearthed all the secrets, and we long to know her reactions.

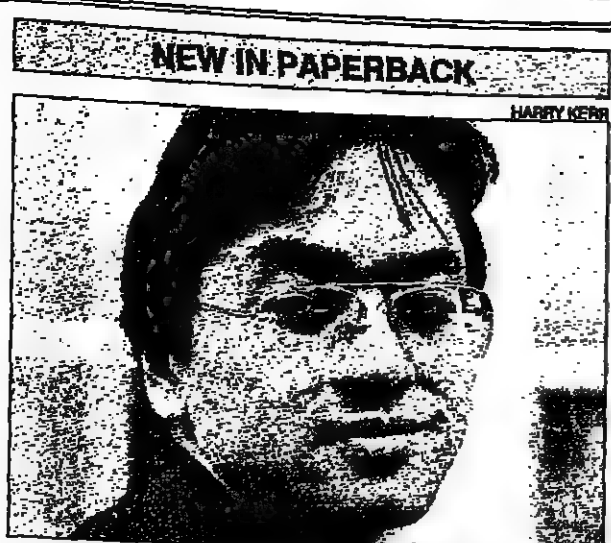
MAUREEN OWEN

BOOKS

11

How Denis fits the Bill

Denis Thatcher is a genial buffer but he is no buffoon, according to his daughter, Michael Gove finds



Ishiguro: echoes of Chaucer and of Lewis Carroll

THE UNCONSOLED
By Kazuo Ishiguro
Faber, £6.99

THIS respectable hotel, this city somewhere in Europe: it all seems familiar yet deeply strange. Mr Ryder, celebrity pianist and narrator, checks in authoritatively enough but soon proves absurdly hazy about why he is here.

The staff, attentive yet disturbingly demanding, allude to meetings, tight schedules. Whenever Ryder falls asleep, the telephone rings. Actually this is a city of dreams, perhaps of death. Vaguely remembered people pop up and then suddenly are gone in a realm of anxieties and exhaustion, albeit not without hope.

This extraordinary novel from the author of *The Remains of the Day* has echoes of Chaucer's dream poems, Lewis Carroll,

Fellini. It is a *Divine Comedy* for our times: epic, episodic, satirical, spiritual, poignant though elusive. The story of a pressurised artist, considered a contemporary music guru, becomes a nightmare of flailing civic guidance and a vision of the state we are in as modernity's lost souls.

Ryder's journey, ending on page 535 aboard a circling tram, is not strong on forward-drive. However, Ishiguro's stream of glimpsed encounters is curiously absorbing. Behavioural observations are sharp, particularly of the small boy Ryder takes round with him but often forgets, peckily hyperactive or worryingly stilled. Some might find the tone cold. Yet Ishiguro's quiet eloquence creates the estrangement that partners distress in our dreams.



MEMORIES OF SNOW
By Alison Dye
Scorpion, £5.99

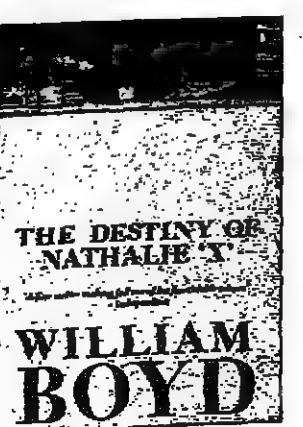
THIS is a compelling and subtle novel about the tragic changes that are wrought in a small New England farming community, when its young men go to fight in the Second World War. Raymond Smith returns home to his girlfriend and their baby to find that his familiar world has been irrevocably altered by death and absence, setting the scene for a tragic conclusion. Alison Dye is strikingly astute on the psychological effects of loss and her vividly drawn characters struggle for self-expression with resourcefulness and humour.

ORIGINAL SIN
By P. D. James
Penguin, £5.99

SINISTER practical jokes are followed by suicide and

THE MORAL ANIMAL
Why We Are The Way We Are
By Robert Wright
Abacus, £6.99

WHY IS IT that rich American parents tend to lavish most attention on their sons while poorer parents concentrate on their daughters? It's all to do with giving the family genes the best chance of survival, according to the evolutionary psychologists. In this densely written but highly readable book Robert Wright explains the infant science, showing that many of our patterns of behaviour are built on instinctive self-interest. A bracing view, but not necessarily pessimistic.



THE DESTINY OF NATHALIE "X"
By William Boyd
Penguin, £5.99

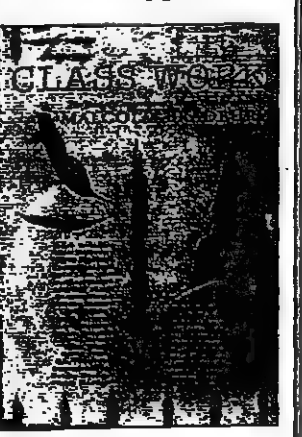
PRIZE-WINNING African film maker Aurélien No has a taste of Hollywood and decides it's not for him. Suicidal Wittgenstein realises that there are people worse off than he and finds the courage to carry on. Edward covets his girlfriend's twin sister and seizes a moment's opportunity to dispose of his rival. Most of these stories concern physical travel. An unassuming satirist, Boyd catches his characters in the midst of their mental journeys, and with a few well-placed adjectives manages to show them as they are, their shifting perceptions of the world and their place in it.

Kate Bassett, Lucy Lethbridge, Perry Cleveland-Peck, Amanda Loose, Hazel Leslie, Fiona Hook, Nicki Household

THE WRONG GIRL
By Nick McDowell
Scorpion, £5.99

LAURA BLADE is a seriously screwed up heroine who balances on a knife edge between reality and fantasy. The story, told by Laura, her taxi-driver lover and a shrink, reveals glimpses of a history of parental abuse, bulimia and feelings of lovelessness and revenge. Laura herself emerges as the "storyteller supreme", whose distorted imaginings come to govern the plot and dangerously blur the reader's ability to distinguish between truth and lies. This compelling but destructive character unsettles the reader and those around her, as her powerful tales act upon the mind.

She begins to teach music at Winsleyhurst, a boys' prep school, where Gervase, the headmaster, 20 years her senior, proffers a worn corduroy shoulder to lean on. Somewhat implausibly they marry — familiar territory to Mary Sheepshears, who was herself wife to the headmaster at Sunningdale School.



CLASS WORK
Edited by Malcolm Bradbury
Scorpion, £6.99

THE FIRST and sole student to attend Malcolm Bradbury and Angus Wilson's MA course in creative writing at the University of East Anglia in 1970 was Ian McEwan. In his introduction to this 25th-anniversary collection of stories by graduates, McEwan heaps praise on his teachers. These diverse stories are linked only by a certain bleakness: especially fine are Kazuo Ishiguro's disturbing tale of a reunion, *A Family Supper*, Jacqui Lofthouse's gruesomely comic monologue, *The Effigy* and *The Great Leonardo*, Erica Wagner's compassionate story about a priest turned lion-tamer.

THE HOLD Denis Thatcher has on the public imagination is the result, more than anything, of the genius of John Wells and Richard Ingrams, whose "Dear Bill" letters in *Private Eye* took the intrinsic comedy of a male chauvinist hen-pecked by a harridan and turned it into brilliant satire.

The image Wells and Ingrams invented of a gin-drinking, golf-playing, comfortably conservative saloon-bar buffer was so convincing that it is easy to forget that the living inspiration for their caricature is an intriguing figure in his own right. *Below the Parapet* seeks to rescue the real Denis from the imagined. Carol Thatcher's own life,

lived in the shade of a dominating mother and demanding brother, imbues her account of Denis's position with a special sympathy. Although Denis is painted as an enemy of emotion, who rarely spoke to his children unless to bark a command and who was abroad when his wife was selected for Finchley, there is something touching about his silent support, doing the washing-up while advisers worked on speeches with the party leader.

His love for his wife is of a

BELOW THE PARAPET
By Carol Thatcher
HarperCollins, £16.99

practical, undemonstrative kind, common to his age and class but unfashionable now. That makes all the more attractive those moments where feeling breaks through, such as Denis's gift to his wife after the Brighton bombing of a watch inscribed "Every moment is precious". The *Private Eye* caricature of consort as couch is firmly demolished. But if Carol Thatcher is a

revisionist in her treatment of Denis's private life, her insights into his political views only serve to reinforce the image already established. There are scores of hilarious anecdotes, all crisply related, but one in particular reveals the unreconstructed Denis of the "Dear Bill" letters. At a Downing Street reception for the cast of *Anyone for Denis?*, a farce based on the *Private Eye* parodies, Denis mistook an actor for a plain-clothes policeman and congratulated him on his colleagues' handling of the Brixton riots: "You get fuzzle-wuzzles on the rampage... you people sort it out in no time at all."

Carol Thatcher admits it was "vintage Denis" but excuses the casual racism by eliding it with Denis's opposition to the "crooked and despotic leaders" of post-colonial Africa. It won't wash. Denis is a glorious golf-club reactionary, not a critic of human rights abuses in Uganda. The appeal of the man and the caricature is the honesty with which he says what so many of his generation think.

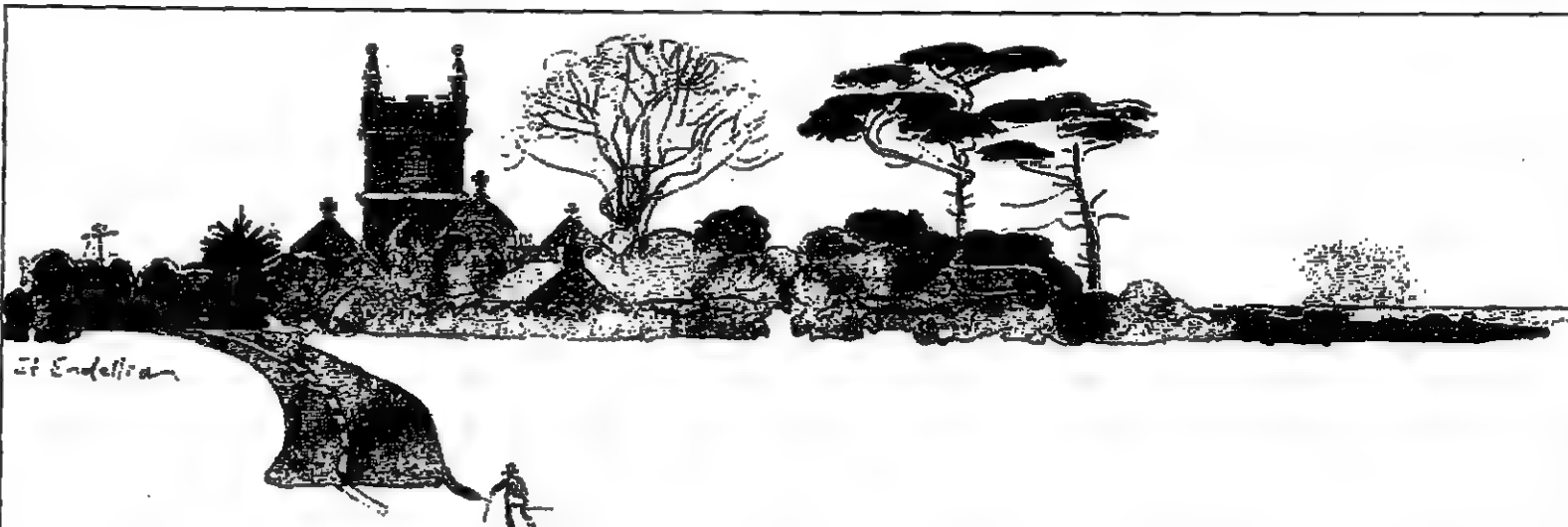
Carol Thatcher has done more than capture her father: she has, by faithfully rendering him, caught the cadences of a type of Englishman, comfortable in his prejudices, loyal to simple virtues, who will soon, like Whig grandees and London dockers, be a thing of the past. In retrieving their standard bearer from fiction and making him flesh and blood Carol Thatcher has done that generation, and posterity, a service.



Thatcher: enemy of emotion

of a type of Englishman, comfortable in his prejudices, loyal to simple virtues, who will soon, like Whig grandees and London dockers, be a thing of the past. In retrieving their standard bearer from fiction and making him flesh and blood Carol Thatcher has done that generation, and posterity, a service.

John Betjeman's faith was bolstered by his love of church architecture, Simon Jenkins says



St Endellion, Cornwall, painted by Paul Hogarth — the huge granite blocks of the tower are said to have been brought from Lundy Island

JOHN BETJEMAN loved English churches as no man before or since. He approached them not as he did a great station or seaside pier, as a work purely of architecture or design. To him they were the embodiment of faith in stone. The ones he treasured most were the Church of England at prayer. He loved to quote Compe's definition of ecclesiastical architecture, that it should bring you to your knees at first sight.

John Murray's collection of Betjeman's writings on churches has mined a vast quarry. His famous extended introduction to the Collins parish church guide would have occupied half this book alone, though I would have liked to read it here in its entirety rather than filleted. But we

Devotion carved from the rock of ages

IN PRAISE OF CHURCHES
By John Betjeman
Illustrated by Paul Hogarth
John Murray, £17.99

have the favourites, both in prose and verse: the evocation of the tombstone carver "from a lost world of wheelwrights and wagon-makers and inn-sign writers"; the essay on Minal church in Wiltshire, entering which is stepping "straight into a Jane Austen

novel"; the glories of Wren in the City of London, of the great Victorian masters, Pearson and Sedding, and, by contrast, of the much-loved chapels of Cornwall.

We recall Betjeman's fascination with bells. At Uffington, "imprisoned in a cage of sound/Even the trivial seems profound", or at Wantage where "it seems a miracle/That leaf and flower should never even stir/In such great waves of medieval sound". We

are ecumenical in taste. There are Baptist, Quaker, Methodist and Catholic churches and chapels. There is "our padre" whose "voice would reach to Heaven and make the Rock of Ages roll". And we visit Betjeman's final resting place, St Endoc's by the golf course by the sea in Cornwall, of which he wrote prophetically: "Oh kindly slat! To give me shelter in this crevice dry".

Those who find Betjeman's writing still too mannered for a harder age should beware. Paul Hogarth's watercolour illustrations play up to Betjeman's whimsicality, even sometimes parody it. But they have the measure of the man and of his loves. This is a book of light-hearted devotion.

Telling tales out of prep school

FACING THE MUSIC
By Mary Sheepshears
Century, £16.99

FLORA, beautiful, 21 and a remarkably talented flautist, seems destined for stardom, until a broken heart and illness threaten to end her brilliant career.

She begins to teach music at Winsleyhurst, a boys' prep school, where Gervase, the headmaster, 20 years her senior, proffers a worn corduroy shoulder to lean on. Somewhat implausibly they marry — familiar territory to Mary Sheepshears, who was herself wife to the headmaster at Sunningdale School.

Perhaps for this reason her lively descriptions of life at Winsleyhurst are the most engaging part of the book. Staff-room politics and passions run riot. Matron is a temptress from Mornington in a petticoat belt. Douglas Butler, the senior master, still regrets the passing of corporal punishment. Most beguilingly there is Meg, the second matron, who has loved Gervase in silence for 15 years.

Admirers of Mary Sheepshears's first novel placed her writing somewhere between that of Mary Wesley and Joanna Trollope. In reality her novels lack the prudence of the former and the sharp contemporaneity of the latter: the character of Meg could have strayed from the pages of a Barbara Pym novel. The warp and woof of Meg's holidays are cooking for her elderly parents and baby-sitting for her ungrateful married siblings.

Hardly surprising that life back at school seems so attractive and we know she need not worry. It is clear from the start that Flora is not a stayer. Alastair Forbes, a handsome single parent, allegedly a former member of the SAS (romantic-fiction shorthand for a virile, firm-jawed hero who is good at skinning rabbits) soon has Flora re-examining her wedding vows and packing her flutes.

I just hope that Meg finally realised that Nice Girls Finish Last and grabbed her chance.

FRANCES DONNELLY

An exciting thriller does not need to profess that it is based on unlikely truth

THE SETT
By Ranulph Fiennes
Heinemann, £15.99

IMAGINE, if you can, a plot that links together the late CIA director William Casey, the former Pakistani President Zia ul-Haq, Winston Silcott and the Broadwater Farm riot, the collapse of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International and the Animal Liberation Front. Now try telling your readers that it is all factual.

That is exactly what Ranulph Fiennes has done in *The Sett*, an extraordinarily improbable epic of violence that stretches from Brixton to the Bahamas and back to Blackburn via interludes in Los Angeles and Jamaica. The story starts when an unassuming accountant out walking with his family comes across a group of men indulging in the gruesome "sport" of badger-digging, which involves flushing the creatures out of their sets, maiming them and then setting bull terriers loose to finish them off.

His attempt to stop this brutality ends with his wife and daughter being raped and murdered. He is beaten unconscious and left for dead, only to wake two days later with amnesia. The recovery of his memory leads him on a global hunt for revenge, much of it conducted via the underworld of cocaine, crack and

Pull the other one, Ranulph



Fiennes: an extraordinarily improbable epic of "faction"

prostitution, with the help of an unlikely group of Peckham-based drug dealers — consisting of black Jamaican men and a female Ulster loyalist assassin — who, Robin Hood-style, also run a rehabilitation service for junkie children of rich parents. Phew.

Fiennes himself, of course, is an improbable enough character in real life: a cross between Ian Fleming and some preposterous John Buchan hero. Educated in South Africa and at Eton, he has served in the Royal Scots and the SAS, fought in Arabia and

is a polar explorer of note as well as the author of a dozen books.

One of these, *The Feather Men*, which exploited his SAS background and posed as "faction", topped the British bestseller lists, which I suspect is why Fiennes has decided to return to the genre in *The Sett*. He has spared no pains to make it convincing, including a detailed index of the vast cast of characters, and even photographs of the leading players.

In his epilogue, Fiennes stresses how much of the story he tried to check because of libel fears. It sounds good but in fact all the identifiable characters who might have cause to complain of defamation are dead, except for two who are serving long prison sentences and are linked to the main narrative only incidentally.

According to Fiennes, his protagonist, named Alex Goodman, approached him in 1994, and asked him to write his biography. Fiennes agreed on condition he keep all the proceeds, excusing himself on the grounds that he was a Lloyd's name. Well, maybe, but I think it is a dead giveaway. This book is a *tour de force* in its scope, ambition and eclecticism, but I think it would have been just as good if he admitted he had made it all up.

PETER MILLAR

MARCEL BERLINS

Over the wall and far away

MICHAEL MASON has brought together some 150 accounts of escape in this collection, from the children of Israel decamping from Egypt to Ronnie Biggs going over the wall in rather more recent times. Though most recount real-life escapes, some are fictional, and it is interesting to see how meretricious and artificial Hemingway, Le Carré or Joseph Heller appear when sandwiched between rough, untutored narratives of prison or concentration camp experience.

This suggests that Mason has cast his net too wide, a suspicion that is confirmed when he remarks in his introduction that the pieces have been chosen "to remind the reader of what humans can endure and what they can inflict": the experience of prison, rather than the getaway, seems at times to have im-

ESCAPE: An Anthology
Edited by Michael Mason
Chatto & Windus, £16.99

posed itself as the dominant theme of the collection.

Nevertheless, there is much here to enjoy: classical escapes, such as Casanova on the leads of the Ducal Palace in Venice; Charles II after the battle of Worcester; Bonnie Prince Charlie and Flora MacDonald; and a host of lesser-known escapees from prisons and prison-camps throughout the ages.

The successful escaper has endless perseverance and ingenuity: in a First World War prison camp, a skeleton key is made from a biscuit tin and the lid of a pewter beer mug; Henry Latude, imprisoned in the Bastille, makes "an excellent saw" from an iron candlestick.

Disguise is useful: Grotius

escapes from Louvestein in 1621 as a chest of books; during the Second World War, Giles Rorling leaves Wiltshire in lipstick, scarf and camel-hair coat, and indignantly ignores the wolf-whistles of a herd of "loutish Luftwaffe youths"; in 1611 Lady Arabella hoodwinks her gaolers by "drawing on a pair of great French-fashioned Hose over her Petticoates, putting on a Man's Doublet, a man-like Perriquet with long Locks over her Hair, a blacke Hat, black Cloake, russet Bootes and a Rapier by her Syde".

But who is the doughty Lady Arabella, and why is she escaping? The book cries out for annotation, for explanation of circumstances, identity, place and time, but we are never given more than the source of the extract.

T. J. BINYON

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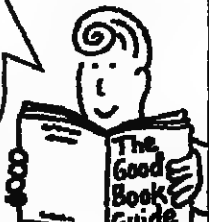
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GOING OUT

CHILDREN

LONDON

Aesop's Fabulous Fables
Updated version of the ancient fables for ages three to eight.
Lauderdale House,
Waterlow Park, N6 (0181-348 8716). Today 10am & 11.30am; £3, child £2, concs available.

Cotter Sisters Circus

Traditional circus adapted for the 1990s and fun for all the family.
Alexandra Palace,
Wood Green, N22 (0836 222232). Today/tomorrow 2pm & 5pm; £6-£10, concs available.

Easter Holiday children's activities

A "family activity cart" travels round the museum offering a variety of activities for ages three to 12.
Victoria and Albert Museum,
Cromwell Road, SW7 (0171-938 8500). Today/tomorrow 10.30am-5pm, free.

The Famous Five

Enid Blyton's classic children's tales told in musical form.
King's Head,
Upper Street, N1 (0171-226 1916). Today/tomorrow noon, £7, concs £5.

The Golden Feather

Eggbert the Space Bird, Charlotte the Caterpillar and Stanley the Stork star in delightful show for ages five and over.
Tricycle Theatre,
Kilburn High Road, NW6 (0171-338 1000). Today 11.30am & 2pm; £3, concs £2.

Go Noah Go!

The Bible story, with added warmth, humour and visual wonder for ages three to nine.
Little Angel Marionette Theatre,
Dagmar Passage, Cross Street.



There is plenty to keep the children amused, from kite-making and paper sculpture courses to storytelling sessions and theatre

N1 (0171-226 1787). Today 11am; £5, concs £4.50.

The Marsh King's Daughter
Magical version of Hans Christian Andersen's tale for ages six and over.
Little Angel Marionette Theatre,
Dagmar Passage, Cross Street, N1 (0171-226 1787). Today/tomorrow 3pm; £6, concs £5.

Miss Nightingale's Cats
Discover Mr White the Tom-

Cat, Plato the Cicada, Peggy the Pony and Athena the Owl in this paw-print trail around the museum.
Florence Nightingale Museum,
Lambeth Palace Road, SE1 (0171-620 0374). Today/tomorrow 10am-5pm; £2.50, concs £1.50, family £5.

Pipsqueak in the Picture
Painting with a mischievous little mouse in this show for ages three to five.

Little Angel Marionette Theatre,
Dagmar Passage, Cross Street, N1 (0171-226 1787). Tomorrow 11am; £5, concs £4.50.

REGIONAL

ABERDEEN
Kites!
Children can make their own using plastic bags, paper and ribbons in this workshop for ages seven and over.
Marischal Museum,
Marischal College, Broad

Street (01224 273131). Tomorrow 2.30pm-4.30pm; £2.50.

BELFAST

The Magical World of the Care Bears
Fun show with three comic adventures for ages three to ten.
Belfast Civic Arts Theatre,
Botanic Avenue (01232 324936). Today 11am & 2.30pm, tomorrow 2pm & 4.30pm; £4.50, children £4.

Youth Theatre Festival

Two productions a night performed by the city's finest young actors, culminating in an awards ceremony.
Lyric Theatre,
Ridgeway Street (01232 381081). Today, phone for details.

CAMBRIDGE

Playdays Live
Stage version of the BBC TV children's programme, featuring the Why Bird and Peggy Patch.
Corn Exchange,
Wheeler Street (01223 357851). Today 11am, 2pm & 4.30pm. Tomorrow 2pm & 4.30pm; £7, concs £6.

CANTERBURY

Ali Baba and the Thief of Baghdad
Adaptation of the classic tale of drama and intrigue with a Middle-Eastern theme.
Marlowe Theatre,
The Friars (01227 787787). Tomorrow 2pm; £4.50, child £4.

GLASGOW

The Wind in the Willows
A musical version of Kenneth Grahame's timeless classic.
King's Theatre,
Bath Street (0141-227 5511). Today/tomorrow 2pm & 7pm; £4-£10, concs available.

HALIFAX

The Show Must Go On
Join the Eureka! staff and help save the day by putting together your own pop concert.
Eureka! Museum for Children,
Discovery Road (01422-330069). Today/tomorrow 10am-5pm; £4.75, child £3.75, family £14.95, under-threes free.

LEEDS

Children's Dance Workshop
A chance to learn a range of different dance styles in classes for ages eight to 13.
Northern School Of Contemporary Dance.

Chapelton Road (0113-262 5359). Today 9.30am-2.30pm; 50p.

MANCHESTER

Star Trek: The Exhibition
A treat for all ages with exhibits including a model of the *USS Enterprise* and a full-size set of the transporter room from *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.
Museum of Science & Industry,
Liverpool Road (0161-832 2244). Today/tomorrow 10am-5pm; £5, concs £3, under-fives free.

Vivid: Children's Workshop

Making paper sculptures using chicken wire, foil, tissue and newspaper. Ages 11 to 16.
Cornerhouse,
Oxford Street (0161-228 2463). Today 11.30am; £2.

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

Children's Gallery
Toys, games and art for the under-fives.
Laing Art Gallery,
Higham Place (0191-232 7734). Today 10am-5pm, tomorrow 2pm-5pm; free.

Science Factory

Science centre specially designed for children.
Discovery Museum,
Blandford Square (0191-232 6789). Mon-Sat 10am-5pm; free.

READING

The Phantom of the Opera on Ice
Spectacular tale of love and revenge with 23 of Russia's top skaters.
The Hexagon,
Queens Walk (01734 591591). Today 2.30pm & 5pm; £9.50-£18.50, concs available.

SOUTHSEA

The Chuckle Brothers
Fun-filled, slapstick show for all the family.
King's Theatre,
Albert Road (01705-828282). Today 11am/2.30pm; £6, child £5.

POP

LONDON

Beanie Man, Shocking Vibes Crew
Jamaican reggae MC.
The Forum,
Highgate Road, NW5 (0171-344 0044). Tomorrow 7pm; £16.

David Devant & His Spirit Wife

English pop band harking back to the days of music-hall.
The Garage,
Highbury Corner, N5 (0171-607 1818). Today 8pm; £5.

Larry Garner

Mississippi blues.
100 Club,
Oxford Street, W1 (0171-636 0933). Tomorrow 7.30pm; £8, members £6.

Natalie Merchant

East Coast folk-rockers, formerly of 10,000 Maniacs.
Shepherd's Bush Empire,
Shepherd's Bush Green, W12 (0181-740 7474). Today 7pm; £11.

Alanis Morissette

Young Canadian singer songwriter.

Shepherd's Bush Empire,
Shepherd's Bush Green, W12 (0181-740 7474). Tomorrow 7pm. Officially sold out.

The Posies
Seattle power-pop quartet.
Astoria 2,
Charing Cross Road, WC2 (0171-434 0403). Today 7pm; £6.

REGIONAL

ABERDEEN
The High Llamas
Sean O'Hagan takes his Beach Boys-style pop symphony on the road.
Lemon Tree,
West North Street (01224 642230). Tomorrow 7pm; £6, concs £4.

BIRMINGHAM

The Posies
See London.
Foundry,
Suffolk Place (0121-643 6843). Tomorrow 7.30pm; £5.

EDINBURGH

The Wildhearts
Punk-metal laddery.
Queen's Hall,
Clerk Street (0131-668 2019). Today 7.30pm; £9.



Sonic Youth's Lee Renaldo

GLASGOW
Tasmin Archer
The balladeer starts her comeback.
Royal Concert Hall,
Sauchiehall Street (0141-227 5511). Today 7.30pm; £9.

Sonic Youth
See Critic's Choice, below.
Barrowland,
Gallowgate (0141-552 4601). Tomorrow 7pm; £10.

HALIFAX

Terrorvision
Bradford funk-rockers with a poppy edge.
Victoria Theatre,
Wards End (01422-351158). Today 7.30pm; £8.50.

LIVERPOOL
Mike & The Mechanics
Featuring Genesis guitarist Mike Rutherford.
Liverpool Empire,
Lime Street (0151-709 1555). Tomorrow 7.30pm; £14.

MANCHESTER
Babylon Zoo
Space-age gothery.
Manchester Academy,
Oxford Road (0161-275 2930). Tomorrow 7.30pm; £8.

★ CRITIC'S CHOICE
Sonic Youth
One of those much talked about and highly influential acts that consistently under-perform at the box office, Sonic Youth remain big on the fringe, their credentials as the prototype American avant-garde rock band intact.

David Sinclair
Manchester Academy,
Oxford Road (0161-275 2930). Today 7.30pm; £9.50. Glasgow tomorrow (see above).

READING
Northern Uproar
Lads wanting to be Oasis.
Alleycat,
Gun Street (01734-561116). Today 8pm; £5.

JAZZ
LONDON
Akase
Brazilian-edged jazz.
The Vortex,
Stoke Newington Church Street, N16 (0171-254 6516). Today 8pm; £7.

Scott Hamilton Quartet
Tenor-playing lynchpin of the US mainstream circuit.
Bull's Head,
Lonsdale Road, SW13 (0181-876 5241). Today 8pm; £7.

John Law's Very Trio
Avant-garde pianist with

Barry Guy, Louis Moholo and Paul Dunmall.
Vortex,
Stoke Newington Church Street, N16 (0171-254 6516). Tomorrow 8pm; £4, concs £3.

Linda Lewis
Recently exhumed 1970s folk-funk diva.
Jazz Café,
Parkway, NW1 (0171-344 0044). Tomorrow 7pm; £12.

Paco de Lucia Octet
Flamenco guitar king, of John McLaughlin fame.
Royal Festival Hall,
South Bank, SE1 (0171-960 4242). Today/tomorrow 7.30pm; £10-£25.

★ CRITIC'S CHOICE:
Jazz Encounters
Artistic directors John and Alec Dankworth have come up with an intriguing format for chamber jazz concerts. The series opens tomorrow (Sunday) with a quartet led by Tim Garland, saxophonist with the folk-influenced group Lammas, and the lyrical American guitarist Ralph Towner.

Wigmore Hall,
Wigmore St, London W1 (0171-935 2141). Tomorrow, 7.30pm; £7.50-£15.

Clarke Peters
Jazz bebop all-stars.
Ronnie Scott's,
Fridt Street, W1 (0171-439 0747). Today 9pm; £12, members £7.

Pharoah Sanders Quartet
Spiritual sax legends.
The Rhythmic,
Chapel Market, N1 (0171-713 5859). Today/tomorrow 8pm; £15, concs £12.

Dave Valentin
US Latin-jazz flautist.
Jazz Café,
Parkway, NW1 (0171-344 0044). Today 7pm; £12.

REGIONAL
ABERDEEN
Sierra Maestra
Acoustic cuban music.
Lemon Tree,
West North Street (01224 642230). Today 9pm; £6, concs £5.50.

CHELtenham
Cheltenham Jazz Festival
A highlight of the jazz year, outstanding line-up.
Town Hall,
Imperial Square (01242 279797). Today/tomorrow, phone for details.

GLASGOW
Sierra Maestra
See Aberdeen.
Club Cubano on the Renfrew Ferry,
Clyde Street (0141-227 5511). Tomorrow 9pm; £7, concs £5.

London
Francis and the Joyettes
Piano recital, including Schubert's D784 sonata.
St John's,
Smith Square, SW1 (0171-222 1061). Today 7.30pm; £6 & £10.

Kate Ryder/Sara Stowe
Vocal and musical experimentation by Crumb, Cage, Scelsi and others.
Purell Room,
South Bank Centre, SE1 (0171-960 4242). Tomorrow 7.30pm; £5.50 & £7.50.

London Symphony Orchestra Brass/Crees
Brahms, Elgar.
Barbican Hall,
Barbican Centre, EC2 (0171-638 8891). Today 3.30pm; £6-£15.

London
Philharmonic/Sawallisch
Brahms's 1st and 3rd Symphonies.
Royal Festival Hall,
South Bank Centre, SE1 (0171-960 4242). Tomorrow 3pm; £5-£20.

New London Children's Choir/Corp
Youngsters sing Briten.
Wigmore Hall,
Wigmore Street, W1 (0171-935 2141). Tomorrow 11.30am; £7.

National Youth Wind Orchestra/Hanson
Khachaturian, Lindgren and Rimsky-Korsakov.
Queen Elizabeth Hall,
South Bank Centre, SE1 (0171-960 4242). Tomorrow 3pm; £7-£12.

★ CRITIC'S CHOICE
The Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra
presents its Sibelius Symphony Weekend under a distinguished exponent of the great Finn's music: Neeme Jarvi. Symphonies Nos 1 and 4 are tonight (7.30pm); No 2 and Tapiola tomorrow afternoon (4pm) and Nos 5 and 6 tomorrow night (8pm).
Richard Morrison
The Barbican,
Silk Street, EC2 (0171-638 8891); £7.50-£22.50

CLASSICAL

LONDON

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Richard Morrison
The Barbican,
Silk Street, EC2 (0171-638 8891); £7.50-£22.50

Peter Katin
Piano recital including Beethoven and Chopin.
Queen Elizabeth Hall,
South Bank Centre, SE1 (0171-960 4242). Tomorrow 7.45pm; £6-£12.50.

Travis Mork
Cello sonatas: Brahms, Prokofiev and Milakowsky.
Wigmore Hall,
Wigmore Street, W1 (0171-935 2141). Today 7.30pm; £5-£12.

REGIONAL
BIRMINGHAM
National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain/Furst
Bruckner and Mozart.
Symphony Hall,
Broad Street (0121-212 3333). Today 8pm; £5-£25.

CARDIFF
BBC National Orchestra and Chorus of

Wales/McGegan
Bach Mass in B minor.
St David's Hall,
The Hayes (01222 878444). Tomorrow 7.30pm; £6-£19.

MANCHESTER
BBC Philharmonic/Sinai
Rachmaninov and Beethoven.
Free Trade Hall,
Peter Street (0161-834 1712). Today 7.30pm; £2-£16.

SCARBOROUGH
Northern Sinfonia/Schiff
Tchaikovsky and Elgar.
Spa Grand Hall,
Spa Complex (01723 376 774). Today 7.30pm; £5-£8.

OPERA

LONDON

Carmen
Travelling Opera's production of Bizet's classic story.
Richmond Theatre,
The Green, (0181-940 0088). Today 7.45pm; £8-£20.

★ CRITIC'S CHOICE

Tosca
Keith Warner's tricky production of Puccini's melodrama is certainly a box-office draw — English National Opera has scheduled 15 performances this spring. Janice Cairns, a soprano who always gives 110 per cent in performance, sings Sardou's put-upon opera-singer (who does the same). David Rendall plays her less than entirely satisfactory lover, and Phillip Joll joins the production as the secret police chief who exploits the cracks in their relationship. Alex Ingram is the conductor.

Rodney Milnes
London Coliseum,
St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-632 8300). Today 7.30pm, £8-£50. (2)

★ CRITIC'S CHOICE
Les Grands Ballets Canadiens
This company from Montreal offers contemporary work that is incisive, skilled and meaningful. New to Britain are a revival of William Forsythe's first ballet, *Urficht*, a duet to Mahler music; Mark Morrissey's *Quincunx*, and creations for the company by choreographers Itzik Galili and Kevin O'Day.

John Percival
Blackpool (see above, right)
Lyric Theatre,
Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-494 5045). Today 6pm & 8.45pm. £5-£23.50.

REGIONAL
BALLYMENA
Nine Glens Irish Danc-ing Festival
Community groups compete in this annual shindig.
Protestant Hall,
(01960 366128). Today 9.30am-10pm; 50p day rate, concs 25p.

BARNSTAPLE
Adonais Ballet Company
Arabian Nights
Full-length ballet based on the tale of Scheherazade.
Queens Theatre,
Boutport Street (01271 24242). Today 7.45pm; £7-£8.50, concs £5-£6.50.

BELFAST
Riverdance — The Show
Song and dance phenomenon with a cast of 80.
King's Hall,
Balmoral (01232 665225). Today 2.30pm and 8pm; £17.50-£22.50.

GLASGOW
Alceste
Gluck's Enlightenment score in a production from Scottish Opera.
Theatre Royal,
Hope Street (0141-332 9000). Today 7.15pm; £3.50-£45.

YEOVIL
Rigoletto
Verdi's dramatic tragedy in English Touring Opera's production, directed by Stephen Medcalf.
Octagon,
(01935 22884). Today 7.30pm; £9.50-£16.50.

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DANCE

LONDON

Royal Ballet: Giselle
Production by Sir Peter Wright.
Royal Opera House,
Covent Garden, WC2 (0171-304 4000). Today 2pm & 7pm; £2-£58.50.

MANCHESTER
BBC Philharmonic/Sinai
Rachmaninov and Beethoven.
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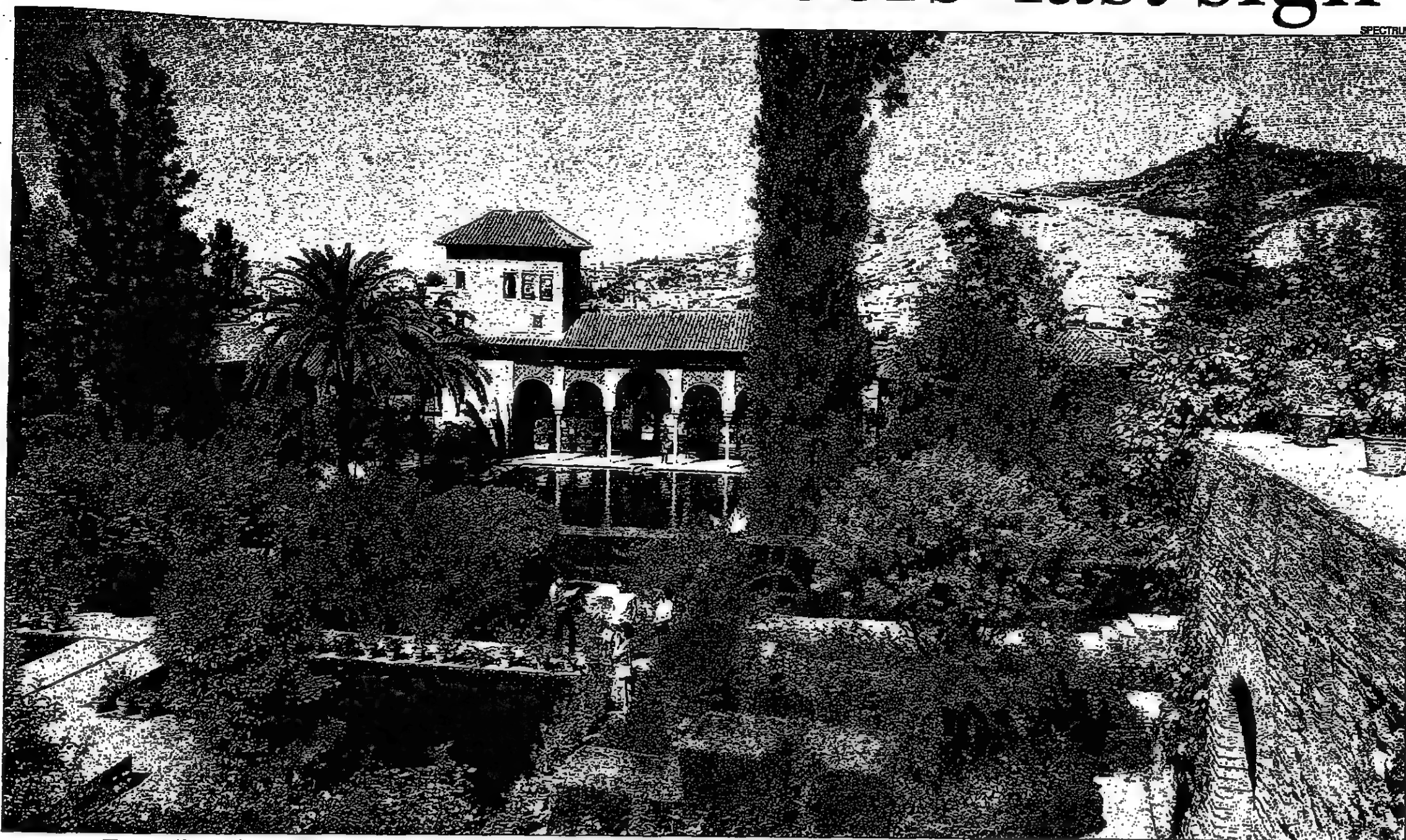
Spain: the Ech

PARADISE FOUND

سلاسل

Spain: the haunting beauty of the Alhambra palace and a dead poet's society make Granada unforgettable

Echoes of the Moors' last sigh



The magnificent Alhambra palace sits on a lofty spur beneath the Sierra Nevada surrounded by lush gardens. Inside it is a treasure house of exquisite Moorish decorative arts

We were going to Granada to visit the Alhambra when Federico Garcia Lorca detained us on the way. "Stop," my wife said, scanning the map. "I think he was born over there, in Fuentes Vaqueros."

I pulled off the motorway, leaving the world of whizzing lorries and mighty petrol tankers, and moved into a zone of unexpected rurality. Donkey and mule carts were bringing home fodder for the animals; long streamers of tobacco leaf hung drying in barns; dense groves of poplar swayed in the brisk wind.

It was into this agricultural scene that Lorca, the poet and dramatist, was born in 1898. He was shot dead at the age of 38, in 1936, at the height of his powers in an "execution" by Nationalist thugs in the opening days of the Spanish Civil War.

The Lorca family house in Fuentes Vaqueros, about nine miles west of Granada, is now a museum and the village school is called the Colegio Publico Federico Garcia Lorca. All is as it should be. But it is for the imposing Alhambra, rather than Lorca's work, that the richness of the garden valley, the *vega*, is best known.

The Alhambra sits on a defensible spur beneath the lofty Sierra Nevada, lording it over the plains. Inside, it is a treasure house of Moorish decorative arts, with arabesques of seemingly infinite patterns, exquisite ceilings and wall tiles, bound together by an architecture so delicately contrived that the palace



The tiled interior of the Alhambra's Casa Real

seems to float in a state of weightlessness. All of it was based on agricultural wealth, not only the Palatine city on the spur but the more humble city below where ordinary people lived.

Water was essential to agriculture and the Moors were brilliant irrigators and managers of water, so it comes as no surprise that water is a central element of the Alhambra. You feel its presence everywhere, from the Generalife gardens above, with their long, axial pool, down to the Courtyard of the Lions, where water runs in four channels from delicate, pillared pavilions, to symbolise the rivers of paradise, and the long, dark pool of the Courtyard of the Myrtles, where at night the sultans could see the reflection of their palace and the glimmering stars. Water meant

power as well as beauty and fascination.

There is so much to see at the Alhambra that no matter how many times you go there, no matter how crowded it may be, the reaction is open-mouthed wonder and delight.

There is a magnificent view of the palace from the hill opposite, the Albaicin, which also qualifies for five-star rating. From this ancient residential quarter, Arabic then Christian, with its narrow lanes and a mass of hidden gardens, you look across at the rough red of the external walls of the Alhambra and see it, suddenly, as the fortress that it was, as well as pleasure palace and centre of power. None of which, of course, should distract you from the less-visited city of Granada below. Some

find this city melancholy, perhaps because of the historical record. In 1492 Ferdinand and Isabel, the king and queen of Aragon and Castile, captured Granada and put an end to Moorish rule in Spain.

Christian Granada seems to be quite jolly as well as somewhat sad, its moods exemplified by the great number of students at university and language schools, and the presence of the bourgeoisie, so prominent a feature of Lorca's city. If you want, you can sit in the smarter cafes alongside women in fur coats, or join the younger throng in the tapas bars around the Plaza Nueva — at the Trastienda (Behind the Shop), for instance, in adjoining Plaza de Cuchilleros, where you squeeze past a counter selling mountain ham and cheese and take a tiny table in the back; or the rougher, readier Casa Julio across the way at Calle Hermosa, where the speciality is fried anchovies and discs of aubergine. There's also a little street called Calderia Nueva, full of Moroccan cafes serving honeyed cakes and endless varieties of tea in tiny glasses.

If your cultural appetite is not yet satisfied there is the Capilla Real, or Royal Chapel, where Ferdinand and Isabel are buried, under a soaring roof in Isabelline Gothic. Then there is the Charterhouse, a byword for Baroque excess. And the former Hieronymite monastery, now inhabited by monks of a closed order, its cloister full of Renaissance cloisters, its church lined with 18th-century frescoes. We paid a visit one evening and

stood enchanted in the cloister, among sweet-smelling orange trees, while the invisible nuns sang in their closed chapel, their voices rising thin as those of schoolgirls.

Since last year there has been something extra in Granada, an addition for those with an interest in that powerful local talisman, Federico Garcia Lorca. When the Lorca family finally moved from the

vega into a town apartment, they kept a little "country house" about ten minutes' walk away on the city's edge. Here they would spend the summers and, in his simple bedroom overlooking roses and cypress trees, Lorca wrote many of his finest poems and several of his plays. The house, now surrounded by a municipal-style park and close to a motorway-style bypass, has

just been opened to the public, with Lorca's niece, Laura Garcia-Lorca, as director. Furnished with its original contents — including a tablecloth embroidered in traditional patterns by Lorca's mother — it is a perfectly preserved Spanish interior of the 1920s and 1930s.

Considering the poet's fate, and the beauty of the verses that he wrote here, there is

nowhere in the city — except for the Alhambra — and the memory of its vanquished princes — that better signifies Granada's bitter-sweet cocktail of sadness and delight.

"Many Spanish visitors cannot enter my uncle's bedroom," Laura Garcia-Lorca told us. "They just stand on the threshold and weep."

ADAM HOPKINS

FACT FILE

■ The author flew to Spain as a guest of Iberia (0171-830 0011). Return fare for the London-Granada flight (via Madrid or Barcelona) is from £169, plus £5 tax.

■ In Granada he stayed at the three-star Hotel Guadalupe (00 34 58 23423) as a guest of Travellers' Way (01527 836791). The hotel, adjacent to the Alhambra, offers a double room with breakfast at about £57, plus 7 per cent VAT. Even closer to the Alhambra is the Moorish-style Alhambra Palace (00 34 58 22 14 68), where B&B costs about £97, plus VAT. There is also the pricier Parador de San Francisco, a former monastery, within the Alhambra walls (00 34 58 22 14 40, or via Keytel on 0171-402 8182). At the foot of the Albaicin, is the Hotel Triunfo (00 34 58 20 74 44), with B&B from about £57, plus VAT.

■ One of the best restaurants, serving typical Granada cuisine with a distinct Arabic touch, is the Mirador de Morayma in the Albaicin. In the not-too-fancy category is the Meson Andaluz, Calle Elvira 10.

■ Spanish National Tourist Office, 57 St James's Street, London SW1A 1LD (0171-499 0901).



Homes that are as old as the hills

WEST from Granada, an hour or so beyond the place of Lorca's death, you reach cave country — inhabited by troglodytes, Adam Hopkins writes.

Dug into the base of huge clay riverbanks or hills of the same hard clay, these dwellings have as many as eight or ten rooms to accommodate a sprawling family. The rooms all run into one family. The rooms are reached by little tunnels, brilliantly whitewashed like the interiors of other Andalusian houses.

Because of the constant year-round temperature of 20F they make comfortable homes, and if you put your kitchen and bathroom on the front, where you will probably have windows in the clay facade, problems of condensation are

minimal. These days, too, all the homes have running water and electricity.

Sadly, the caves fell out of favour during the 1960s and most of those who could afford to moved into apartment blocks, leaving behind many empty caves, and some in the hands of the poor.

Enter the Martinez family, building constructors from the strange city of Guadix, capital of cave country. The family has bought a neighbourhood of hillside caves and converted 30 of them into a hotel complex — the Cuevas Pedro Antonio de Alarcon (named after the local man who wrote the tale of the three-cornered hat, source book for Manuel de Falla's opera). Rooms have been dug out and made much bigger. The wooden

furniture is painted, local-style, like gypsy wagons. There's a cave dining room serving local dishes and, if it wasn't for a motorway running in the valley beneath, it would be a troglodytic idyll.

The hotel opened late last year and I was the first foreign visitor. I'd go back like a shot for the extraordinary landscape of eroded clay and the pleasure of sleeping inside a hill with its views of the Sierra Nevada.

I predict a fashionable future for the caves of the Guadix hinterland.

● Book via Andalusian Charming Hotels (00 34 5 2445591). Cave with two double rooms and kitchen/living room from about £40. Further information: Spanish National Tourist Office (0171-499 0901).

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PAGE 19

PLUS TRAVEL TIPS AND RESERVATION PAGE 21

Caribbean: a dream family holiday in Barbados; exploring the haunting landscape of Costa Rica and

New hands rock the cradle

The first thing you need after a nine-hour flight is a refreshing dip in the sea. But as I emerged from the foam, I was bleeding and half-blind. I had chanced on a piece of coral and cut myself, and then a stray wave knocked off my prescription glasses, leaving me staggering around in the sand.

And this was just the beginning of our family holiday in Barbados. Could it improve with an 11-month-old baby and an exhausted banker husband in tow?

The answer was a resounding yes. A week at the newly opened Almond Beach Village hotel was the answer to our prayers.

The village opened in December last year to cater for working parents who need a relaxing break with their offspring. As a father of two, Ralph Taylor, managing director of Almond Beach Village and its sister hotel, Almond Beach Club, was well aware of the problems faced by holidaymakers with children. Until the Almond Beach opened, there was nowhere on the island which provided a comprehensive family holiday. Bajan culture is of the "children should be seen and not heard" variety.

If parents were asked to name their ideal holiday facilities, top of their list would be a hotel crèche which opened from 9am-5pm. It would be manned by trained personnel whom you trusted. It would take tiny babies as well as older children. The staff would be happy to prepare bottles of formula and hunt down parents should their children become distressed. There would be cots for afternoon naps and an outside play area.

There would be warm sea and safe swimming off sandy beaches, with adequate shade so little Johnny didn't burn. And baby-sitters to enable sojourners at beach-side restaurants at reasonable prices.

There would be good-sized rooms with space for a cot and a fridge to store bottles. Even better would be a "one-bedroom suite" with an adjoining sitting room to double as a baby's bedroom. The restaurants would provide highchairs and the staff and other guests would be understanding and sympathetic.

All this, and more, is provided by Almond Beach Village. For those with older children, the all-inclu-

FACT FILE

■ The author was a guest of Almond Beach Village, which has 280 rooms and a family centre.

■ Almond Beach resort's all-inclusive holiday includes: return flights and transfers, accommodation, breakfast, lunch, tea, dinner, unlimited wine, beer, branded drinks and soft drinks with lunch and dinner, sports activities, qualified instruction, children's clubs and nursery, evening entertainment, insurance.

■ Prices for a seven-night package: adults from £1,196; there is no charge for children up to 12 staying in parents' rooms. Child flights cost from £393. Children travel free up to



the age of two. The price for the second child depends on room size.

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sive price means parents don't have to keep dishing out money for ice-creams and popcorn. In an imaginative touch, treats are dispensed every afternoon from a candy-striped bicycle.

Of course, no hotel can deal with the inevitable jet-lag which disturbs children's sleep for the first couple of days. And no hotel can soothe your baby to sleep at 8pm when the little angel thinks it is time for his afternoon outing. Nor can it save you from the unbelievable amount of luggage a baby imposes.

But whatever horrors the nights bring, the village crèche means that parents can take a siesta during the day to catch up on their sleep. It also ensures that parents can pick 'n' mix their holiday — playing with junior, visiting Villa Nova, Anthony Eden's former home on the east coast of the island. After watching the baby splash around in one of the village's nine pools, you can visit the capital, Bridgetown, and admire Nelson's Column in the main square.

This was indeed the holiday of our dreams. The turquoise sea and white-sand beaches, the scent of

tropical flowers and old-fashioned Bajan charm all worked their magic.

There were some minor gripes. Child monitors would have been helpful. English ones don't have the range for the village's 30-acre site. Dinner time also brought its problems: either you hired a babysitter at £3.50 an hour or interrupted your candle-lit meal to nip back to the room and check that the baby was sleeping peacefully. However, the hotel promises to investigate the provision of monitors.

While the food was excellent, it wasn't baby-friendly. One solution was to buy jars from the local supermarket. Another was to ask a chef in one of the village's four restaurants if he would cook something simple such as scrambled eggs or grilled fish — and more often than not he would oblige.

One important point to remember is that if your baby is over a year old, he or she is unlikely to fit into a British Airways bassinet. Instead, you will have the child on your lap for most of the flight. Smart mothers book a child seat and bring a car seat with them.

RACHEL KELLY



Parents are free to enjoy watersports while children are looked after at the Almond Village crèche

Megaship boost for cheaper cruising

MORE than 350,000 British holidaymakers will cruise the Caribbean and Mediterranean this year, and the travel industry is convinced that by the turn of the century this number will have doubled.

Despite reports of fires in mid-ocean, unfinished maintenance work, ships running into submerged reefs, and a "disastrous" start for Thomson in the market, nothing can apparently halt the surge in interest in cruising.

The biggest stimulus to growth has been created by the cheaper voyages offered by the mass-market tour operators. Airtours, for example, has teamed up with the American cruise company Carnival to enable British holidaymakers to fly to Florida, spend three nights in a hotel and then four nights aboard one of the company's "floating resorts" — ten-deck superliners — from £499 per person.

Even as its first chartered vessel, *Sapphire*, was running into problem after problem in the Mediterranean this week, Thomson announced that "following the success of its new Mediterranean cruises" it would be offering trips in the Caribbean on board *Horizon*, a Greek-owned ship in the Celebrity Cruises fleet, from £660 for a week next winter.

"THE advent of charters now bring tropical cruising within reach of a whole new generation of holidaymakers, with prices comparable to many of the most popular Caribbean beach holidays," says Thomson's managing director Charles Newbold.

A 23-night cruise on P&O's *Bagship Oriana* costs from £1,995, and holidaymakers spending Christmas and New Year at sea between Mombasa and the Seychelles will pay £14,660 per person for a suite on Cunard's *Sea Goddess*.

As the demand grows, however, more islands are having to tackle the problems caused by what amounts to floating blocks of flats (and all too often their accumulated rubbish) arriving at their prettiest ports and then sailing away having contributed little or nothing to the local economy.

HARVEY ELLIOTT



Friendly Above



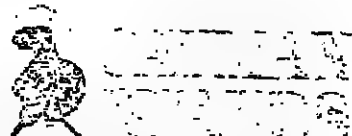
Friendly Below

In the Cayman Islands the people are renowned for their warmth and friendliness. The powder white sands of Seven Mile Beach shelve gently into a turquoise sea.

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We stood in the moonlight, gazing up at the towering Arenal volcano, its peak shrouded in dark, drifting cloud. It chattered and huffed away like a grumpy old steam engine. Spiralling plumes of reddish-brown smoke and ash broke the cloud cover. Red-hot lava glowed on the barren lower slopes.

Our Tico guide spoke decent English and conveyed his disappointment. He wanted us to see the spectacular nocturnal pyrotechnics of a huge eruption. We waited expectantly for an hour or so. "Sorry, no good tonight," he said.

My wife and I made for the truck, ready for bed at the nearby mountain lodge. And then the unpredictable giant rumbled and roared. The cloud cleared momentarily to reveal a perfect conical shape, and the peak exploded into a

brilliant fireworks display that blazed in the night sky.

It was our last night in Costa Rica, which lies between Nicaragua and Panama and has coastlines on both the Caribbean and the Pacific, and nature had provided an unforgettable grand finale.

This was a memorable trip and, mostly, the memories are fond ones. As a couple of 60-plus-year-olds, we should, perhaps, have opted for a quieter life. We rode roughshod for four hours on horseback to get to the top of another volcano and down again. We sampled the excitement and nerve-

Explosions of natural beauty

jangling risks of white water rafting. We thrust through narrow, log-strewn jungle waterways in a small boat. We drove where signposts were non-existent and the potholes were like mantraps.

There is no rest cure. Costa Rica has miles of deserted golden beaches and a scattering of excellent hotels for those who simply want to laze in the tropical sun. But that is to waste an opportunity to explore and appreciate a country which, in an area about the size of Switzerland, packs in an extraordinary diversity of scenic and climatic changes with flora and fauna to match — 5 per cent of the world's plant and animal species and 10 per cent of its butterflies.

It boasts more protected national parkland for its size than any other nation, has Latin America's longest unbroken record for democratic government, and abolished its army in 1949.

There is, of course, a downside. Outside the protected areas, the marvellous rainforests are logged, legally and illegally, at an alarming rate.

There are huge foreign debts. Cleared land is needed to grow vital bananas and coffee exports. Crime is mostly petty but a tourist kidnap and one or two attacks on tourist groups have the Government worried. Gun-toting police are in evidence. A drugs problem is linked to financial corruption.

That said, you are undoubtedly far safer on holiday in Costa Rica, among its friendly people, than in many parts of Europe or North America. Get away from the capital, San José, a hot, smelly, traffic-jammed, architectural atrocity, and there is little hassle.

We spent our first week on pre-arranged excursions. If we had known what we were in for we would have balked. We were up before six o'clock each morning to be whisked to our daily destiny, always in the essential 4x4 vehicle.

We took in Cartago, the old colonial capital, and Irazú, the country's highest volcano at 11,265ft, with its weirdly impressive moonscape appearance. Our road to Turrialba



Richly coloured iguanas roam the spectacular landscape

was a mixture of ruts, boulders and mini-craters.

We were warmly welcomed at our mountain lodge berth but our high-altitude night was bitterly cold. Our ride to the top of Turrialba's extinct volcano offered panoramic views of breathtaking beauty above the cloud forest.

White-water rafting on the formidable, rain-swollen Pacuare river meant 20 miles of rocks, rapids and turbulent

rushing water to navigate, all a bit much for beginners. Several tourists went overboard from our little convoy of rafts. We made it, soaked, exhilarated — and mighty relieved.

A small canopied launch took us 50 scenic miles through jungle waterways to Tortuguero, on the humid Caribbean coast. We goggled at howler and spider monkeys.

Continued on next page.

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Costa Rica and
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WEEKEND SATURDAY APRIL 13 1996

TRAVEL

17

... a luxury cruise aboard the world's biggest liner which oozes style and comfort and caters for every taste

Princess who won't be weather-beaten

She is big, beautiful... and runs rings round Fidel Castro. The lady in question is the epitome of capitalism, oozing Italian style and brash American wealth: she is the *Sun Princess*, the largest cruise liner in the world.

When you first set eyes on her for the week's cruise — which departs from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, to circle Cuba en route to the Bahamas, Jamaica, Grand Cayman and the Mexican island resort of Cozumel — the liner looms so massive from the quayside that she seems more like a de luxe New York apartment block than anything which could possibly put to sea.

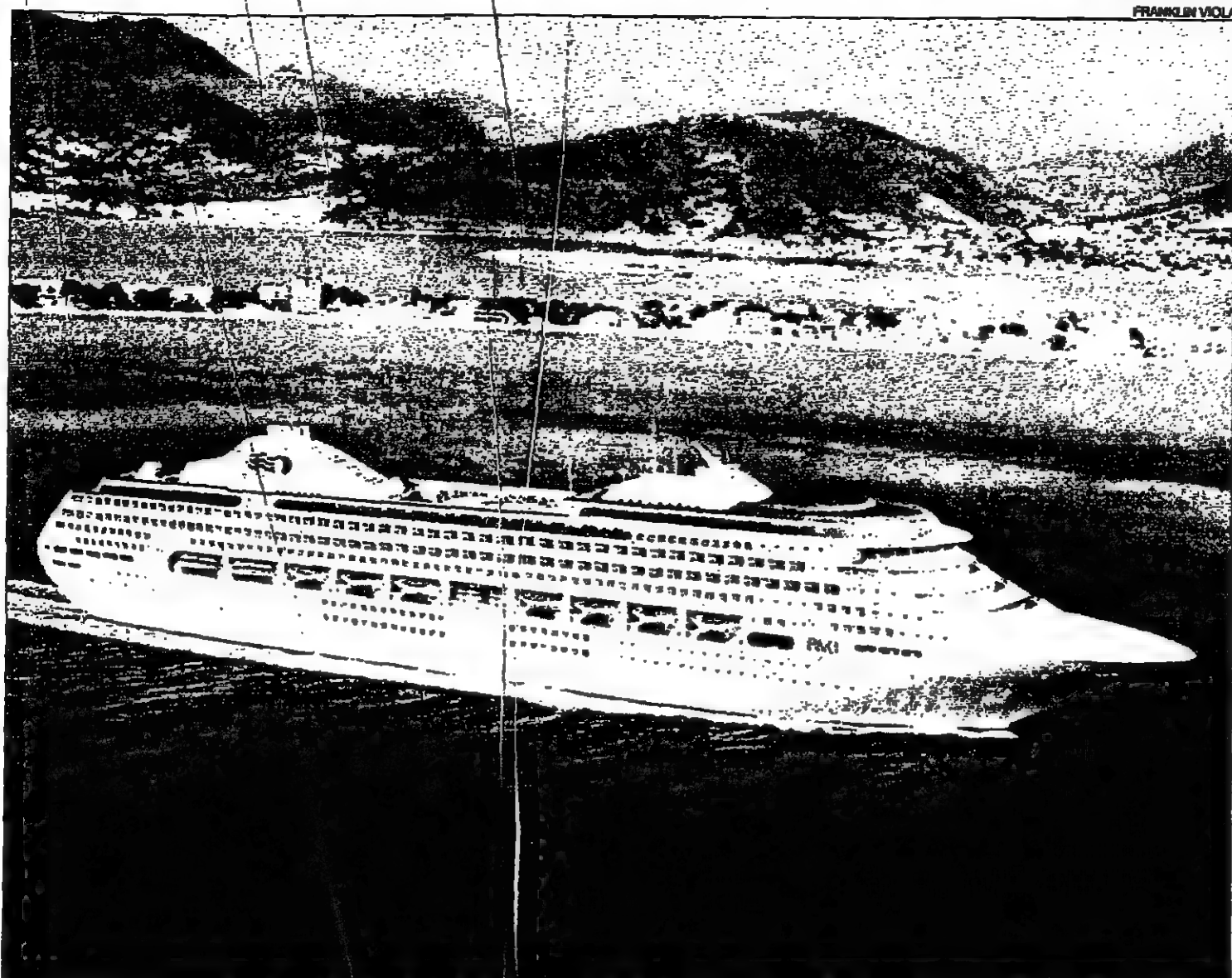
Yet put to sea she does, to a rowdy fanfare of hooting and cheering, complete with all the superlatives you might expect — taller than Nelson's Column, enough electric cables to reach from London to Moscow, enough carpets to cover all but two miles of the London marathon route.

The \$300 million (£188 million) P&O *Sun Princess* also carries enough food to make a serious dent in the shortages felt by Cuba's seven-economy islanders, with 600 dozen eggs, 1,500 steaks and 2,000 pounds of pasta consumed by the ship's 1,950 passengers every day.

The Saturday we set sail, the citrus growers of Florida were railing against some of the coldest weather on record, which dragged its coat-tails across the Caribbean. A chilly wind whipped the legs of the optimistically shorts-clad cruise passengers, while a steel band did its best to evoke a tropical atmosphere in the unseasonable cold.

Next morning dawned grey and drizzly, as did the next and the next. As a result, we had to rely on the ship's recreational facilities far more than we would have done had the sun been shining. The first port of call, Princess Cays, a secluded bay on the Bahamian island of Eleuthera, would have been heavenly in the heat, but it was a bit like Humberston on a bad weekend in the gloom.

Most passengers queued for almost an hour to take one of the *Sun Princess's* motorised launches for the choppy trip to Princess Cays, wandered forlornly for an hour or two around the only eatery and bar in sight — Hard Rock Café — and did not eat your heart out, this is the sort of barbecue most village fêtes could manage to outdo. — then queued again for the crossing back to the comparative comfort and



Built for pleasure: the *Sun Princess's* route includes Cuba, the Bahamas, Jamaica, Grand Cayman and Cozumel in Mexico

warmth of the ship. Hardly anyone spent the entire day ashore.

But all this did not mar the marine dream because the *Sun Princess* seems to be one of the few liners which can keep its customers satisfied even on the rare occasions when the weather is poor. Holiday-makers from rival cruise ships whom we met during visits ashore said they felt the service and facilities aboard their vessels were not good enough to make up for the lack of sunshine.

The *Sun Princess* tries to treat its passengers like royalty. There is a canny mixture of space and intimacy, of marbled splendour and relaxed, casual nooks. There is

plenty to do for those feeling energetic and a myriad secluded corners indoors and out for reading and dozing.

Activities include concerts in two full-sized theatres, on-board shops, gym, tennis courts, jacuzzis, while our favourite places were the library-cum-reading room, which would do most London gentlemen's clubs proud, and a wood-paneled games room with enough board games and bridge lessons to keep the most cerebrally-oriented occupied. All this as well as a swimming pool and two splash pools.

All the food you could possibly

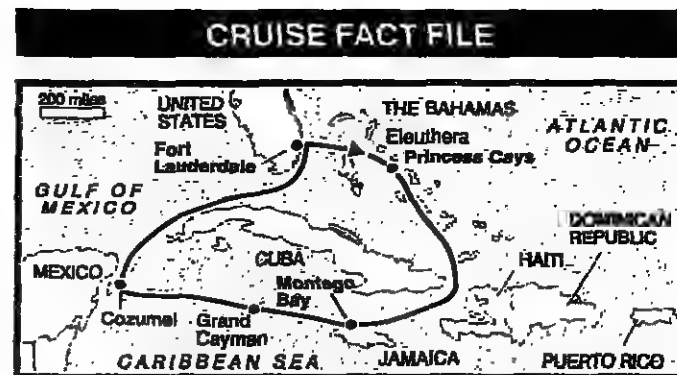
eat, available 24 hours a day, is included in the price. The *Sun Princess* has two main dining rooms for formal meals, both regal salons with split-level areas which mask any impression of mass feeding even though 1,000 are catered for at a time. There is also a bistro and a pizzeria on this largely Italian-crewed vessel. And if night starvation should still strike, room service is always available in the immaculately kept cabins, which are cleaned twice a day.

There is enough booze aboard to keep a battleship afloat, though the purser says that many holidaymakers, especially Americans, spend the entire week afloat without

spending a penny. For the more hedonistic, there are indoor and deckside bars as well as a late-night disco.

After a day swinging around the eastern and southern coasts of Cuba, with the pinpricks of meagre communist electric lights visible from the liner relieved by the brilliant glare of the American military base of Guantanamo, we arrived at a rain-soaked Montego Bay in Jamaica.

In the sun, which must be almost guaranteed most of the time, the organised trips ashore would be tempting — visits to a plantation house or a climb up a spectacular waterfall. But the downpour pro-



■ The author was a guest of Princess Cruises.

■ The Tropical Mix cruise aboard the *Sun Princess* costs from £1,045 for nine nights. A saving of £250 can be made by booking at least 60 days in advance. Booking: 0171-800 2468.

■ Special offer to readers of *The Times*: Book a *Sun Princess Caribbean Cruise* between October 1996 and April 1997 through Thomas Cook Direct and save from £100 to £300 off the full brochure fare and get a cabin upgrade.

For further details, and to book, telephone Thomas Cook Direct on 01733-335509, quoting reference CR01. Bookings must be made before April 30, 1996, to qualify.

■ Best time to travel: the coolest and driest months are December to April. May, June, October and November are wet, although tropical showers can occur year-round. Although hurricanes are

rare, if they do occur, it is usually in September.

■ Cruise tips: most cruises are much more casual than they used to be, although there are usually one or two formal evenings to cater for when packing, which can involve more luggage than other package holidays. However, careful packing is needed because many cruises involve flights to an embarkation port and airlines limit passengers to one or two suitcases and one piece of hand luggage.

■ Take binoculars to enjoy the best views from the cruise liner when passing close to shore. It is also advisable to take high-factor sun creams and lotions because cooling sea breezes can be deceptive and the sea and ship decks reflect the sun back in your face.

■ Reading: *Cruises* (£7.95) and *Caribbean Cruising* (£7.99), both published by Thomas Cook.

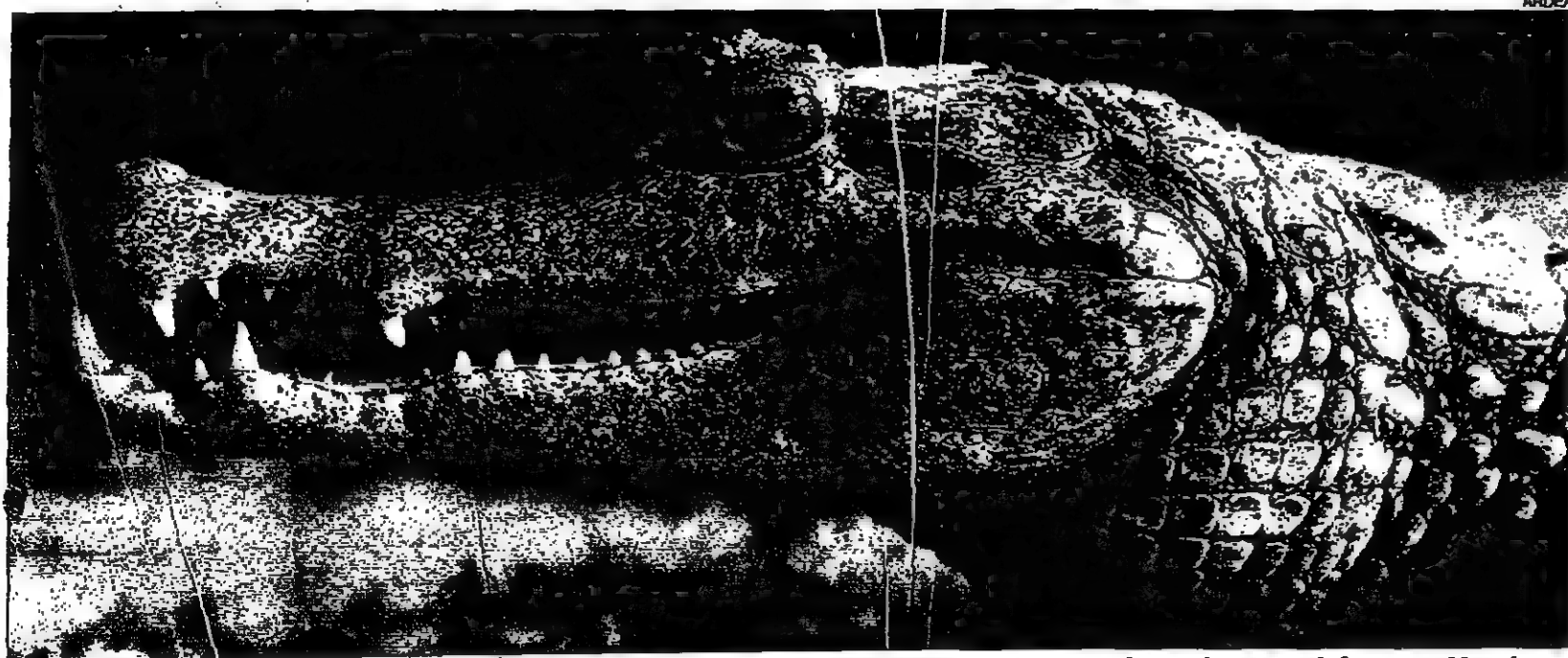
vided an opportunity to hire a car and driver to explore Jamaica's interior on what turned out to be Bob Marley Day — the birthday of the late Rasta idol. Jamaicans in every roadside shack selling beer and rum listened with hushed reverence as Bob's mum opined about her loner son and the sort of food he used to like. At least we returned to the ship drier than the tour parties who went waterfall climbing in the rain.

Day four brought Grand Cayman, such a pristine and wealthy island that four wealth is probably forbidden under an old colonial by-law. The sun finally appeared but the wind was still having none of

this holiday lark, and a highlight snorkelling trip to frolic with stingrays was abandoned after a few seconds' assessment of the heavy swell whipping up the sea over the coral reef.

The *Sun Princess's* passengers finally experienced something approaching tropical heat on the final stopover in Mexico before heading north for Florida again. Toluca and Cozumel lie at the heart of the Mayan Indian culture, which reached its height more than 1,000 years ago. The magic of its past is impregnated in the stones of its temples and villages.

EVE-ANN PRENTICE



Costa Rica is rich in natural beauty — from its birds and animals, such as this spectacled cayman, to fiery volcanoes, rainforests and beaches

Continued from page 16
crocodiles and caymans, green lizards and iguanas, river turtles and a remarkable variety of bird life.

The star turn was a sloth, hanging by his toes in a riverside bush and munching

nonchalantly on green leaves while we edged within touching distance.

Tortuguero, on the Caribbean coast and accessible only by boat or plane, is an isolated settlement. Turtles nest on its beaches in season. We stayed

at the delightful Manati Lodge, where Lilia Figueroa's river shrimps in garlic butter were mouthwatering.

We saw unimpaired colourful toucans, the handsome and glossy, green-backed, red-bellied trogon, flycatchers and hummingbirds. Beautifully hued butterflies fluttered everywhere.

A pre-breakfast boat trip through the dense rainforest brought more wildlife sightings, including the turkey-sized great caracaras, a rare bird threatened with extinction.

I drove a hire car for our second week, not without trepidation. But, potholes apart, driving was no hardship, even though temperatures often soared into the 90s.

We headed for the Nicoya peninsula on the Pacific coast, lounged at the small resort of Tamarindo and, again by moonlight, watched with incredulity as baby leatherback turtles, hatched from eggs buried 2ft down in the sand, pushed their way to the surface and headed instinctively for the ocean.

At Nosara, the unoccupied beach was idyllic. We bathed in the warm ocean and watched flight after flight of pelicans soar overhead in orderly V-formation.

It was a long but worthwhile drive through fertile farmlands back to the mountains and Arenal, with its lake and nearby relaxing hot springs.

Verdict: Costa Rica proved to be a great place for a holiday. But the developers are moving in. North Americans, in particular, are increasingly buying land and building retirement homes and condominiums. Tourism is now the country's top earner, well ahead of bananas and coffee.

I suggest that you get there sooner rather than later.

JOHN GRANT

HOW TO GET TO COSTA RICA AND LOCAL DETAILS

■ The author travelled with Sunvil Holidays (0181-568 4499) and flew from London to Costa Rica with Iberia International Airways (0171-830 0011), changing first at Madrid, and then Miami for San José.

■ Other airlines flying to Costa Rica include KLM (0181-750 9000) and American Airlines (0181-572 5555). Return fares from Heathrow start at about £953, but vary depending on the departure date chosen.

■ Sunvil Holidays offers a two-week, fly-drive package, including a bed and breakfast (full board for one of two) excursion days during first week, car hire and insurance for two people from about £3,700.

■ Other companies offering holidays to Costa Rica include Jules Verne Voyages (0171-616 1000), Journey Latin American (0181-742 7320), Reef and Rainforest Tours

(01803 866965) and Explore Worldwide (01252 319445).

■ Weather: it rains most of the year on the Caribbean coast, mainly in the afternoons. Elsewhere, December to April is regarded as the dry season — but you should expect the unexpected.

■ Local currency: colones (around 285 to the pound). Dollars, dollar cheques and credit cards are all acceptable.

■ No visa needed for British passport holders.

■ Medical: jabs for typhoid, polio and hepatitis A, and malaria tablets are recommended but check with your GP.

■ Restaurants, mostly serving French-style food, and bars are to be found in most areas. Hotel prices are not cheap by the usual standards of a developing country. Petrol is cheap, about £1.30 a gallon.

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from Page 23

HONDA

(c) The eye at the end of a lasso through which the rope passes to form a loop. Western US from the Wild West and the Spanish *honda* a sling. "Honda" is the loop plaited in the end of a rope to make a running noose. Also the metal grommet or thimble inserted in that loop.

MORAN

(c) The warrior group of the Masai tribe which comprises the younger unmarried males, also *il-moran*. The Masai designation. "Their hair is allowed to grow, and as soon as it has grown long enough to plait, they are called *il-moran* (warriors)."

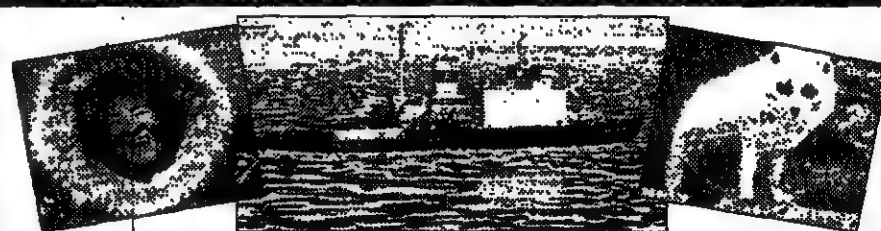
NARC

(b) A federal, state, or local narcotics agent. US slang. An abbrev. of *narcotic*. "Bo, a rookie detective, is so confused by the Department's manipulations that he doesn't guess that she is an undercover narc."

KELPIE

(a) A smooth-coated, prick-eared, Australian sheep-dog, which may be black, black-and-tan, blue, or red. First bred from imported Scottish collies about 1870. An eponym from an early specimen of the breed. "Lassie was, like all Kelpies, highly strung, with brains under her broad, thin-boned skull."

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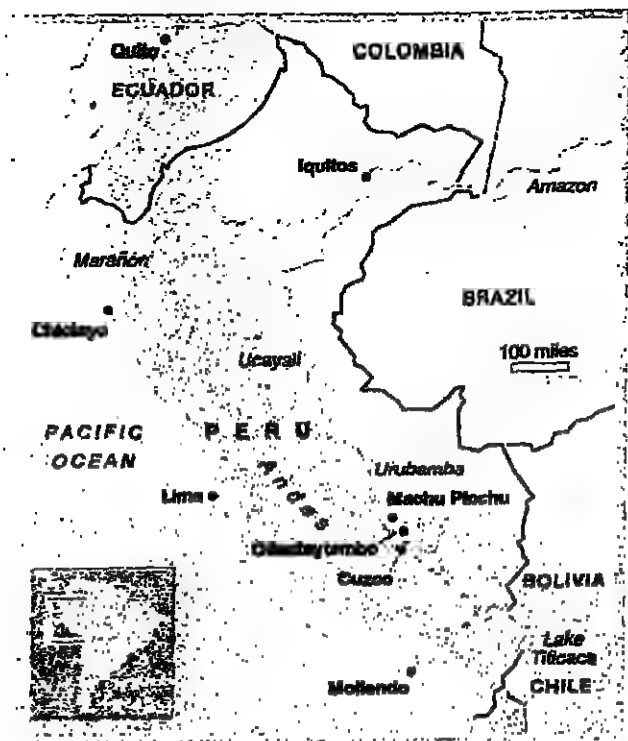
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Peru: on the trail of the Incas, master masons whose Lost City is perfectly preserved high in the mountains

Exploring the eighth wonder of the world



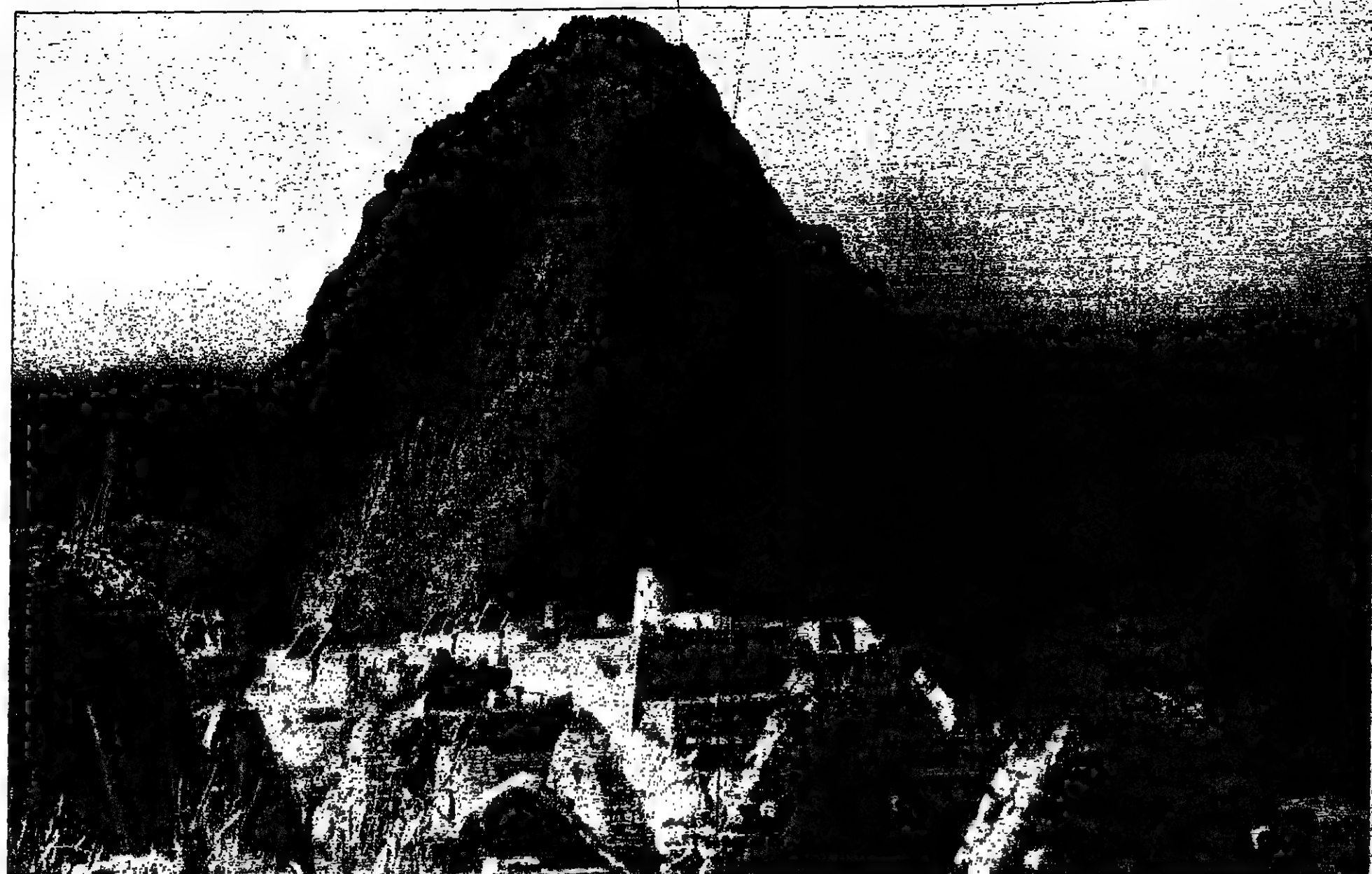
Two things about Peru are inescapable — the awe-inspiring peaks of the Andes and a dysfunctional past.

From the Cuzco Valley, high in the Cordillera, the Incas ruled an empire stretching from what is now Colombia to central Chile. It was a complex, advanced society until Francisco Pizarro arrived in 1532 at the head of a Spanish army. Emperor Atahualpa, radiant in gold, befitting his descent from the Sun, came to meet him in peace. Instead, he was seized by the *Conquistadores* and his execution marked the beginning of three centuries of domination by Spain.

Pizarro's perfidy is still spoken of as if it happened yesterday and there are visible tensions between the native Indians and those of Spanish descent. The slaughter of the Indians was on a genocidal scale and their descendants

show grim satisfaction when they point out Pizarro's remains, displayed in a plain coffin in Lima Cathedral with a separate box for his head. The unfortunate man was assassinated by natives in 1541. The conquest took 30 years of bloody fighting. A rebellion failed in 1572 and the last rising was as late as 1780, not long before the 19th-century war of liberation from Spain.

Cuzco city is an hour's flight from Lima. The Spanish destroyed the Inca capital but built their own churches and palaces on the same foundations. Thus a Dominican friary stands on the remains of the Temple of the Sun, and there are walls of Inca stonework, each massive block crafted to perfection, shoring up supermarkets and discos in side alleys. The Incas were master masons but never discovered either the wheel or writing, so there are no histori-



The atmospheric Machu Picchu, the Lost City, was abandoned by the Incas before the Spanish arrived. The complex contains immaculate temples, palaces and houses

cal records and much of their way of living remains a mystery. Outside Cuzco, the valley is littered with more substantial Inca remains: temples, baths, aqueducts and the towering fortress at Ollantaytambo. The most dramatic site is Machu Picchu, the Lost City mythologised as the El Dorado of the Andes. It stands on a small plateau, surrounded by mountains swirling in cloud, and has been abandoned since before the Spanish came. No one knows why.

As a result, Machu Picchu was not destroyed by Pizarro and remained lost until archaeologist Hiram Bingham stumbled on it in 1911. Now it is Peru's premier attraction: a stunning complex of perfectly preserved temples, palaces and neat houses. Their thatched roofs have gone, but otherwise the Incas might have moved out last year.

In the main temple, the altar is carved with a human outline, and there is a drain at its feet for sacrificial blood. Perhaps the offering had the right effect for the atmosphere is magically peaceful, particularly at sunrise: a place of deep stillness, broken only by the rush of the river below. For impact, it matches the Taj Mahal or the Pyramids.

To get there involves a three-hour journey from Cuzco by tourist train with an armed police guard the government is still nervous about the remnants of the Shining Path guerrillas. At the end, a four-mile track zigzags up the mountainside — minibuses charge £1.30 for the journey, admission to the site is £6.60.

An alternative approach is the slower local train to a halfway point and then the Inca Trail through the mountains. But this is serious walking at high altitude, three days carrying your tent and food.

The Machu Picchu Ruins Hotel is right by the site — and expensive at £115 a night for a double. But there are plenty of cheap places to stay at Aguas Calientes, 2km back down the

railway, and there is a campsite by the station. Leaving aside the Inca legacy, life in the villages and countryside is picturesque but painfully poor — often mud-brick shacks with no electricity, running water or sanitation. The grazing llama and alpacas have a melancholy look, but their owners, wrapped in traditional rainbow-coloured ponchos, are friendly. Their markets are a good place to buy an alpaca blanket or sweater.

International flights mostly go to Lima, founded by Pizarro on the narrowest of coastal

visible in churches on every corner, a vast Franciscan monastery and the austere cathedral on Plaza de Armas.

If you have time for only one museum, Enrique Poni is your man. Mr Poni arrived from Italy 47 years ago and has never returned. His private collection includes artefacts dating as far back as 300 BC — magnificent gold from the Inca period and later religious art.

The collection is housed in his home at Lord Cochran 466 in the suburb of Miraflores. Admission is by appointment (phone 4222437) and for £6.50 he shows you round personally.

Eating out is inexpensive and can be excellent: broadly Spanish with some spicy local dishes. Dinner with wine at a local restaurant in the Cuzco valley costs £4 a head, while eating under the stars at La Ermita in Lima's Barranco equals the best of Mediterranean seafood and atmosphere, for about £12.

Peru is not for the faint-hearted. Transport can be head-bangingly unreliable, and theft on the streets is rife in Lima, as is drug-pushing. But you can minimise problems by carrying your money in a body-belt and keeping on the beaten track.

Some, not always young, travellers backpack and see the country cheaply using buses. Haggle trucks also pick up passengers for a few Soles. A double room for a night in a pension costs about £4.50. For more comfort and predictability, it is best to arrange a package, covering flight, accommodation and internal travel through a specialist operator such as Journey Latin America or Kuoni.

MICHAEL HARTLAND



Young boys celebrate a religious festival in Cuzco

FACT FILE ON PERU

- The author was a guest of KLM and Journey Latin America.
- Flight only: KLM flies from Heathrow and 13 regional airports, via Amsterdam, to Lima. Booked through Journey Latin America from £545 (June-September 1995) 0181-747 3108.
- Packages: Journey Latin America, 14-15 Devonshire Road, London W4 2HD (0181-747 3315), 12 days including flights from £1,542. Kuoni Travel, Dorking, Surrey RH41 4AZ (01306 740888), 15 days including flights from £1,976. Bales Tours, Junction Road, Dorking, Surrey RH41 3AB (01306 885991), 16 days including flights from £2,399.
- As Peru is just south of the Equator, the only significant climatic difference is between the wet and dry seasons. The dry season (May to September) is obviously best for walking or trekking in the Andes.
- Useful reading: the *Lonely Planet Travel Survival Kit* for Peru, price £8.95.
- Health: vaccination for typhoid and, in some areas, malaria protection — consult your GP.

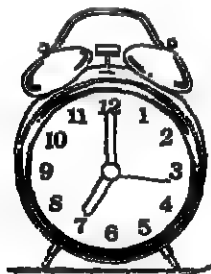
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plains as a port for the new province. It is home to about seven million — a third of Peru's population. Few have paid jobs: there are miles of shantytowns and incessant street peddling. The older parts are beautiful and very Spanish, with laid-back bars, pavement cafés and a vibrant night life. The Pacific breaks on palm-shaded beaches.

The past is preserved in the Museo de Antropología y Arqueología and other national museums, often with free admission. The building occupied by the Spanish Inquisition from 1570 to 1820 is also on display, with gruesome waxworks of heretics being racked and roasted. Three centuries of Catholicism are

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Soaring buzz of first-time gliding

Lightning fractures the sky above Lasham and thunder rumbles around the airfield. We are grounded in the lecture room as Clive Thomas, a flying instructor, explains basic meteorology and the principles of rising air, the invisible force that holds gliders aloft. It is a morning for considering theory rather than flying. Who would want to be launched skywards on half a mile of steel wire in a thunderstorm? "The best lightning conductor in Hampshire," Mr Thomas says.

Other dangers threaten. Those black-based cumulus clouds overshadowing the airfield are citadels of violence, five miles high, perhaps, and filled with ice-laden, hurricane-force winds able to suck an aircraft into their centre and destroy it. There is a story about a German pilot who entered one of these grim fortresses in the hope of seeing a new altitude record. When his glider started to disintegrate, he baled out, opened his parachute and overtook the remains of his aircraft - going up.

So much for high ambition. There are old pilots and bold pilots, the saying goes, but no old, bold pilots. On the airfield the gliders are tied down against the wind as pilots search the sky for the cues that will tell them the weather front is clearing. In that ability lies the essence of the sport: spotting those often subtle meteorological cues and accurately reading the sky. The fastest readers develop the quickest instinct and make the best pilots.

"I know of no other sport that has such a conjunction of man and nature, where the glider becomes an extension of you and you become an extension of the air around you. It is silent and graceful and, when things go right, a sublime buzz, one pilot replies when I ask him why he is so enthusiastic about being jerked into the air without an engine.

Gliding is the most well-established of the aerial wind sports, which have sub-divided into paragliding, hang-

gliding, parasailing, sky-diving and parachuting. However slender the aircraft may look, in the air they are immensely strong.

By the afternoon the weather front has moved away and the sun breaks through. The ground starts to heat up and generate bubbles of warm air which rise in thermals and condense into dumpy, cotton-wool clouds.

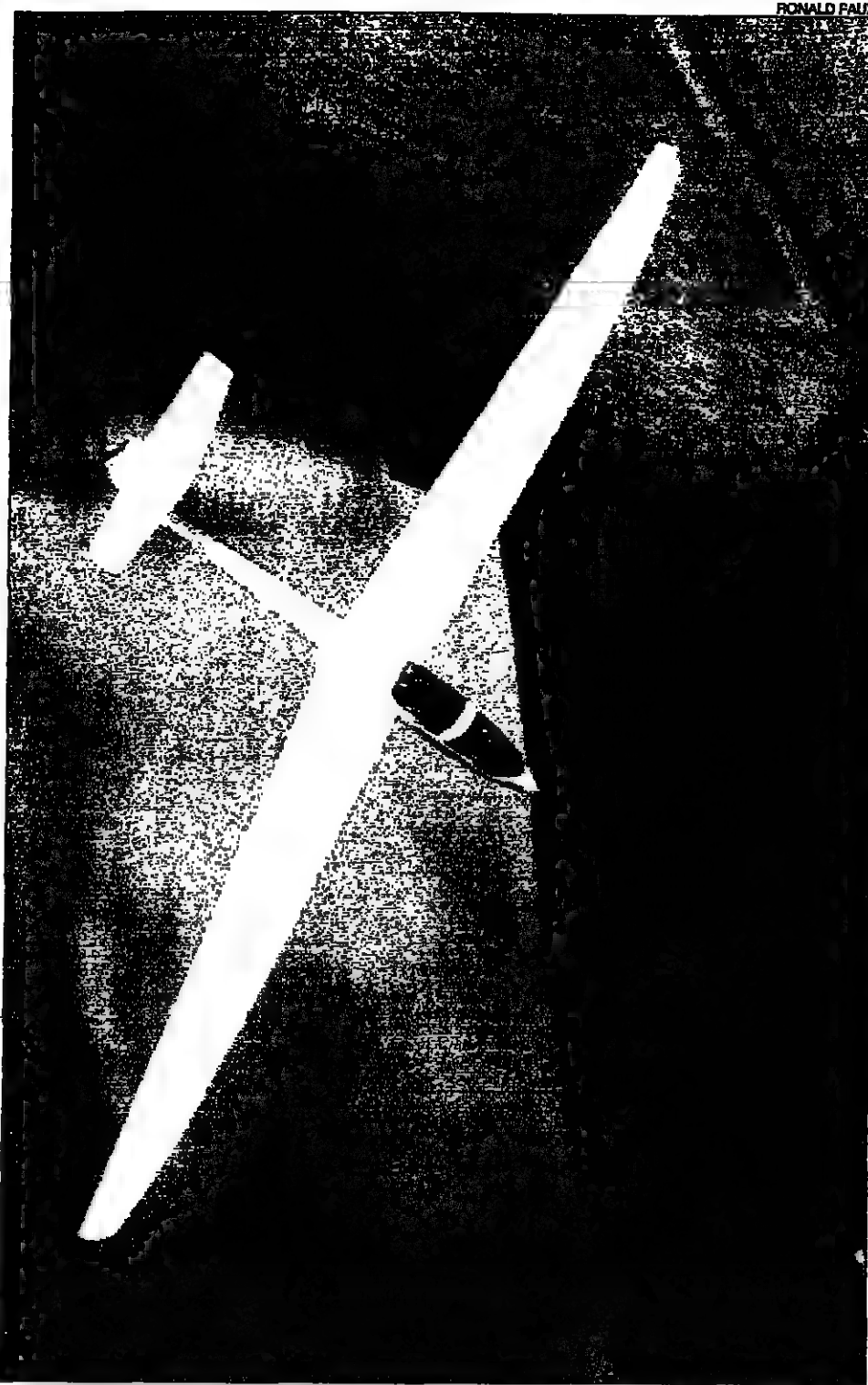
We strap ourselves into the narrow cockpit of the K13 trainer, check the controls as the tow cable is hooked to the keel. The distant winch takes up the tension and then hauls us steeply into the air. We climb faster than the Space Shuttle, according to Mr Thomas. At 1,400ft we arrive directly above the winch and the nose starts to dip. I release the cable and the glider settles on the wind, the only sound being the rush of air over the 50ft span of wings.

Ahead, a cloud with a base the colour of a bruise looks promising. Another glider is already circling beneath it. We approach and feel the patch of rough air that is the precursor of a healthy thermal and seconds later the left wingtip is jolted upwards.

"Go now," Mr Thomas says, and I thrust the glider into a steep left bank, trying to coordinate feet and hands so that the turn is smooth and we do not skid out of the thermal, an invisible cone of lift which is drifting with the wind. We are trying to track the narrow lower core so the horizon is spinning wildly. The instruments indicate that we are climbing 700ft a minute.

The wider reaches of the thermal require flatter turns and at 3,200ft mist spatters the canopy, signalling that we have reached the point where our thermal is condensing into cloud. The first glider has already headed away in search of more rising air and beneath us another slim pair of wings have begun to climb the same winding escalator that we have taken.

Thermals are only one of the "engines" a glider may use.



Another glider starts to climb the thermal escalator that the writer has just taken

They can cruise for hours in the wind lift created when wind accelerates up the face of a cliff or, more spectacularly, climb into the stratosphere using the air currents that cannot in waves from mountain ranges. The world record altitude reached in a glider is more than 46,000ft.

The basic course at Lasham avoids such lofty heights. There are three of us students in Mr Thomas's care and the next will be waiting to fly. Nose down and tail up we are soon in the circuit 800ft above the airfield.

Even the basic training gliders are so aerodynamic they will lose only one foot of height for every 40ft of forward flight. High performance gliders, the albatrosses of the sport, stretch this glide angle to

60ft for the loss of only one vertical foot.

"Some days you get the impression they just don't want to come down," Mr Thomas says. To neutralise this inclination to float for ever more, I pull on the air brakes and couple of small steep-chase hurdles spring from the wings. There is a roar as the smooth airflow is broken and the glider stops floating and starts falling.

We turn steeply into wind and ahead the landing area is clear. Just as well: we are now in the grip of Newton's law without an option.

The glider's skid drops gently into the grass and we slide smoothly to a halt. The lesson is over.

RONALD FAUX

Literary double act on fictional facts

If you're the kind of person who spends more time deciding which books to take on holiday rather than which clothes, Bloom Reading Holidays will sound like bliss: a week in a rural retreat with nothing to do but read books, talk books, eat and drink, and enjoy the countryside. A reading list around which discussions will be based is provided, so you needn't even worry which books to take.

We gathered on a Monday night at Ty Newydd (the New House) in the small village of Llanysumdy, near Cricieth, northwest Wales. Ty Newydd was the last home of David Lloyd George, whose grave is beside the tree-lined lane that leads from the house to the village. His resting place, marked by a large and simple lichen-covered stone, looks over the Dwyfor river.

Ty Newydd today is more usually filled with writing courses, though it was emphasised from the start that we were on a holiday, not a course. Over supper we met the week's two writers: Beryl Bainbridge and Bernice Rubens. They have taught at writing courses together so often that they form a regular double act, a kind of literary Morecambe and Wise.

After supper they were keen to discover who we were and what had brought us there. Anne was an academic, prone to skim-reading to get at the facts; she wanted to learn to read fiction more slowly. Sue and Jean were regular visitors to the Dartington Literature Festival in Devon, and liked the idea of longer quiet time with two of their favourite authors, while Carole, a psychologist, said she wanted more direction in her reading; the course, she said, sounded like fun.

Fun it was, with Rubens revealing that she likes Mills and Boon, and wondering why there was no porn on the recommended reading list. "Pornography is interesting, I found a copy of *The Well of Loneliness* under my mother's mattress, so naturally I read it at once. If it's under a mattress it has to be interesting."

She offered other thought-provoking comments: "I don't think writers improve after their first book. I think writing is the only thing which practice doesn't make perfect."

As the discussion shifted to *Wuthering Heights* and the smouldering Heathcliff, Carole brought her psychologist's experience to bear and insisted: "*Wuthering Heights* has a lot to answer for. It does not lead to good relationships."

Bainbridge wondered if

memory of Bainbridge whistling for a cab and stepping into it for *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Sessions were held in Ty Newydd's library, which looks out over lawn and cow pastures down to the sea, a ten-minute walk away. To the left lay the cliffs beyond Cricieth, and one afternoon I walked along the beach to where a colony of cormorants and a solitary heron stood in the breaking waves.

As I walked I was mentally composing the list of Top Ten books we had all been asked to present to the group. I was astonished that writers I considered comparatively lightweight, such as Margaret Drabble and Susan Hill, appeared in some people's lists of all-time greats, while other lists reminded me to re-read Thomas Hardy and to read Brian Keenan's *An Evil Cradling*.

At the start of the week I had two thoughts: first, that it would be a relaxing break of book talk, and second, that at the end of it I could put aside the reading list and get back to my own choices. The first thought proved true, but the second was hopelessly optimistic.

I returned home with a love of reading renewed, and a list as long as a Booker judge's: *Beloved*, *Lie Down in Darkness*, *Crossing the River*, *Herzog*, *Return of the Native*, *What's Bred in the Bone*, *Wuthering Heights*... And a realisation that I now needed a Reading Year, not just a Reading Week.

MIKE GERRARD

● The author was a guest of Bloom Reading Holidays. Courses in 1996 include *Stan Barrow and Diana Griffiths at Ty Newydd* (May 27-June 2) and, at Meadowhead House in Scotland, *Carol Cleeve and Jim Friel* (July 29-Aug 4), *Barbara Trapido and Ian Crichton* (Aug 5-11), and *Lesley Glaister and Mark Illis* (Oct 21-27). The cost is £325 full board. ● Details from Bloom Reading Holidays, 22 West Craft, Ratho, Midlothian EH12 8PB (0131-333 4547). Details of writing courses at Ty Newydd (01766 532811) fax (01766 525 465).

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Readers share their experiences of the hard-sell tactics used by some timeshare operators



Madeira, the island where Jack Henfrey and his wife were impressed by a salesman's presentation of a new timeshare complex and put down a £500 deposit. A decision they were to regret

Beware the timeshare trap

Charles Dodd, of Calne, Wiltshire, responded to a telephone survey on holidays two months ago. A few days later he was phoned again by a man representing an advertising agency and told he had won a seven-day, luxury holiday for two in the Canaries. The holiday was his on condition that he and a partner attended a two-hour timeshare presentation in Exeter.

"Confident of our ability to withstand the blandishments of a timeshare salesperson, my partner and I decided to risk the trip," Mr Dodd writes. On a Saturday later that month, Mr and Mrs Dodd presented themselves at offices in Exeter. They were shown details of developments in the Canaries (the only holiday location offered to them) and informed about timeshare properties. The saleswoman then told them that "if we wanted to go ahead with the purchase, we had to sign up and pay the deposit before we left. After that the offer is gone," she said. "There is no second chance... You can't go away and think about it, you have to make a decision now," Mr Dodd decided to leave without making a purchase.

He has been offered a holiday but it will not be free. "The saleswoman must have meant that the price was a one-off offer," says Diana Hanks, consumer services manager of The Timeshare Council (TTC), the official UK body for the timeshare industry. If Mr Dodd had agreed to a purchase at the presentation, he could still have gone away and thought about it. "According to the Timeshare Act, 1992, there is a mandatory cooling-off period of 14 days, during which the purchaser may withdraw from the agreement," Ms Hanks says. Similar cooling-off periods

also exist in France, Portugal and the United States, and are under discussion in the Canary Islands. The rest of Europe will be covered by the European Timeshare Directive, scheduled for April 1997, which calls for a cooling-off period of ten days and for measures to prevent the sellers receiving any advance payments in this time. Until this is implemented, however, some timeshare companies are trying to take advantage of grey areas within the law. Madeira, for example, has provided some tricky cases where, although the potential buyer has with-

drawn within 14 days, the timeshare company has returned only part of the deposit and withheld the remainder to cover administration costs. Jack Henfrey and his wife, who live in Cambridge, were on holiday in Madeira last May. They were impressed by a salesman's presentation of a new village timeshare complex near Funchal and put down a £500 deposit. Although the salesman had insisted the money had to be paid that day, the couple had been reassured by his explanation that, "we had nothing to lose, for we had a fortnight's cooling-off period, during

which time we could pull out and all monies paid would be refunded." Some days later, the Henfreys paid a second deposit of £545, which wasn't due until September 1995. "During the following days, we naturally had some queries, but then found it was never possible to meet the salesman to discuss them," Mr Henfrey says. When the couple finally received a note to confirm details for a proposed visit in January 1996, "The figures bore no resemblance to the stories of cheap flights and accommodation open to members of the timeshare. My wife and I decided that we should pull out without delay."

They waited four hours for a meeting with the salesman. "We were bullied and told that we were out of the cooling-off period, that the salesman had confirmed this with the company lawyer and that the company that owned the timeshare group and many hotels in Madeira and Portugal were immensely wealthy and powerful." After an exchange of solicitors' letters, the company acknowledges that the Henfreys were within the cooling-off period, but it is still withholding £315 of their money.

Although resorts in Madeira should come under Portuguese law, some claim to have chosen a separate Isle of Man jurisdiction, which allows them to retain a part of the deposit. Ms Hanks says that regulations should be in place at the end of July that will make it clear whether all or part of the deposit is refundable. Meanwhile, buyers should make sure that this point is explained before they hand over any money. More than three million households own timeshares at around the world, and most are apparently satisfied with their timeshare holidays. Many say that they would buy again, so these examples of determined salesmanship appear to be the experience of the few.

JEANNIE MCNEILL

IF YOU are considering buying a timeshare, The Timeshare Council suggests that you follow these simple guidelines:

- Do your research: be sure you know what kind of timeshare you want and how much you can afford.
- Assess your commitment: sign the agreement only when you are sure it is what you really want. Some countries, such as Britain, give you a legal right to a cooling-off period. Find out what rights you have if you are not signing the agreement in the United Kingdom.
- Credit cards: remember, you cannot stop a credit-card payment. The bank is legally bound to honour your signed transfer slip.
- Read the print: make sure that any promises made to you are clearly shown in the printed agreement. This particularly applies to promises to

sell your existing timeshare if you buy a new one. Get full details of your timeshare, showing your legal ownership rights and obligations, details of your management fees and the arrangements for an elected owners' committee.

All TTC members must operate within the council's code of conduct: this includes ensuring that buyers have secure occupancy rights and that satisfactory arrangements are in place to protect their money before completion of the property.

TTC provides an advisory and conciliation service free to those dealing with its members. For a free booklet, send an SAE to The Timeshare Council, 23 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6HB (0171-821 8845, fax 0171-828 0739).

The Department of Trade and Industry booklet on timeshare, *Your Place in the Sun*, is free from Citizens Advice Bureaux.

A world of entertainment on offer

HARD GRAFT USA
THE US Travel and Tourism Association (USTTA) ceased to exist in this country on April 12. Instead, a new Visit USA Brochure Line (0891 600530, 49p a minute during peak time, 39p at other times) provides a brochure and recorded information service.

Using the number, it took me 11 minutes, at a cost of £4.29, to order a comprehensive fact-file and to write down at breakneck speed the UK phone numbers of the 28 American regions, from Arizona to Washington, offering either a brochure service or specific information lines.

PAY TO DRIVE
AUSTRIA is joining its Swiss neighbours by introducing motorway tolls from next year. Tourists wishing to use motorways and some Alpine passes will need to buy and display a "Kombi" ticket, valid for two months and costing Asch350, approximately £23.

FOR NIGHT BIRDIES
THE ULTIMATE for fanatics — long daylight hours and the midnight sun in June mean that round-the-clock golf is possible in Iceland. The Arctic Open Golf Tournament in Akureyri (June 26-29) actually starts at 8pm each evening. Icelandair (0171-388 5599) offer three-night packages with hotel B&B accommodation and flights from £375, plus \$300 (EISS) to enter the Open, with unlimited golf and a gala dinner.

KEEP MOVING IN CORSICA
CORSICA specialists Voyages Ilena (0171-924 4440) are offering their June self-catering holidaymakers the chance to spend each night of their stay in a hotel in a different part of the island. A week costs from £362 for each member of a group of four, which also includes flights and car hire.

Jill Crawshaw on Himalayan cycling tours and other holiday news and bargains

CUT-PRICE LONG-HAUL HOLIDAYS
HOLIDAYS to Kenya, Goa, Sri Lanka and the Caribbean will cost less than many similar packages to the Canary Islands, Cyprus and even the Spanish Coast next winter. Thomson Holidays (0171-707 9000) is offering two weeks' B&B in Goa from £439, Sri Lanka from £495 and two weeks' on Kenya's coast from £509 (£439 in May).

In the Caribbean, if you are prepared to self-cater, you can spend two weeks in Antigua for £499, in Jamaica for £525 or Barbados for £569. All-inclusive holidays in the Dominican Republic start at £525 for 14 days.

MISSISSIPPI MANSIONS
ANTIQUE dining tables, the best china and silver, plus traditional southern breakfast with mine host are promised at some of the 120 pre-Civil War plantation homes and Victorian mansions listed in the new *Mississippi Bed & Breakfast Guide* from the Mississippi Information Line (01462 440787). Many of the properties are listed buildings.

WORKING IN OZ
GOOD news for people under 27 wanting to work in Australia on holiday and recently refused working visas when the quota ran out: an extra 9,000 visas have been allocated until July 1, when the new increased annual quota of 42,000 comes into effect. Australian High Commission, 0171-379 4334.

IT'S NOT OVER
ADDICTS take heart — there should still be plenty of snow for a skiing holiday on the Stubai Glacier in



Pavarotti sings in the Caribbean

Austria for the Spring Bank Holiday, though conditions could get mushy in the afternoons. Alpine Tours (01227 454777) offer a week's B&B in Mieders from May 25, travelling by coach, and including lift pass and insurance.

GRAND PRIX
FOLLOW Damon Hill's (hopefully) triumphant progress towards the Grand Prix title with Motor Racing International (01304 612424), who cover all the events of the season. For the European Grand Prix at Nürburgring on April 28, a coach-tour quickie (out Saturday, back Monday morning) costs £69, plus £65-£250 for tickets to the race. Three rather more comfort-

able nights with B&B at a hotel in Koblenz and travelling by air, costs £369 plus tickets.

BIKE PIONEERS
KEADVENTURE Travel (017687 73966) have permission from the Chinese Government for the first group to cross the Himalayas by mountain bike, starting in Pakistan, and travelling through Tibet down to Nepal, via the Kailas Mountain, one of the holiest mountains for Hindus and Buddhists. Holidaymakers need to be fit, though there's a support vehicle. The tour lasts from September 7 until October 6. The fully inclusive price is £3,495.

EARLY BOOKING
CARIBBEAN Connection (01244 341131) have tickets to the Barbados Opera Festival for Easter next year, with prices from £1,979 for seven nights with half-board at Tamarind Cove, including flights and tickets. Pavarotti sings on Easter Sunday (March 29) beneath the stars in the gardens of Holders Hill, a 17th-century former plantation house.

SPECIALIST BARGAINS
PLENTY of holiday bargains are currently available — even from small and specialist companies. Until July, Far East specialists, Premier Holidays (01223 516677) have cut the price of a seven-night half-board holiday to Sri Lanka to £495. Chialia (0181-686 5533) offers self-catering apartments in Umbria until early May, reduced from £133 to £99, while Cadogan Holidays (01703 332661) have a reduction of £50 per person on holidays in Gibraltar. A seven-night stay until May 22 now costs £296, or £443 for a fortnight, with other reductions until the end of June.

Paris chic? Watch the French loaf

A new weekly column on the pleasures available just a rail journey away

TAKE any Sunday night Eurostar back from the Gare du Nord to Waterloo and you will hear British couples triumphantly relating the intellectual ground covered in Paris — the Corot exhibition, the Louvre, the Opéra Bastille... they might as well have a big C for culture sewn on their coats. The once relaxing weekend abroad has become a terrifying instrument of enrichment.

I know this because we secretly give our guests in Paris a culture count when they appropriate our sofa-bed in the Rue du Bac. The highest rating so far was earned by two academic types who, in the space of 48 hours, saw a one-woman show inspired by the works of Simone de Beauvoir, the Musée d'Orsay, the Jeu de Pomme, a maitre d'hotel of the latest Peter Brookplay and a three-hour film in Serbo-Croat. They also deposited a

have raised *Le Lounging* to the height of chic.

Lounging is the lazy version of café society: it must be done in public with good friends and as little mental effort as possible. Conversation must be relaxed. Over-enthusiastic debates are frowned on.

Le Lounge Club is the finest example of the genre in Paris. The long smoking-room-cum-lounge is painted midnight blue, with enormous leather Chesterfields and armchairs on a wooden floor. Its murky interior suits those conducting illicit affairs because you can barely see further than the bottom of *Le Long Drink*.

Cocktails are much favoured and there is often a pianist, or CDs of Frank Sinatra, Paul Anka, Nat King Cole and cheesy Europop from the Fifties. The owner, Patrick Derdarian, says he wanted to create "une ambiance musicale très crooner".



Imagine then the delight at discovering what Parisians really do in London: "I recently took a return trip on the Eurostar," says a reader in the hip magazine *Novae*. "I spent the day in bed there with a friend watching British television and eating pizzas."

This kind of passive resistance, this valuing of consumption over cultural consumption, can only be admired. Why should there be an imperative to achieve while on holiday? I am not necessarily suggesting that visitors to Paris should remain in their hotels ordering from room service — this is only possible in the very early stages of a relationship — but there is a lot to be said for lounging around.

Much lounging inspiration has come from Britain, particularly the Living Room in Soho, where Londoners drape across sofas to a background of easy listening music. Similar establishments have opened in Paris — *Le Lounge Club* du Zebra Square and *Le Café de la Musique* — and

The fashion-able habit of lounging has also meant a renaissance for the glorious bar of the Hotel Lutetia on the Left Bank. The womb-like room is panelled with mahogany in the style of a grand ocean liner, with an art deco painting of the *Lutetia* cruise ship. The margaritas, kirs and martinis are correctly executed and the chairs comfortable. The hotel is a time warp: it harboured the Gestapo in the war, was liberated by the Americans (among them Hemingway), and then housed refugees. Now it is lounge central. The Lutetia is in snuggling distance of the Bon Marché department store and Prada on the Rue de Grenelle for those who wish to shop and shop.

It is uplifting to realise that Parisians recently learnt the art of slobbing around from Britain, just as the British learn about culture from France. This is one of the few successful exchange mechanisms in the European Community so far.

● *Lounge Club du Zebra Square*, 1 Rue de Boulaivilliers, 16th (open Thurs, Fri and Sat evenings). *Le Café de la Musique*, 213 Avenue Jean-Jaurès, 19th. *Lutetia Hotel Bar*, Rue de Sevres/Babylone, 6th.

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looking for a highly intelligent, capable, confident & energetic female, b/w, 30-40 in her late 20's or early 30's, with an eclectic taste & interests. I am a very casual relationship, working & playing hard & sharing laughs, friends, food & wine, music & a lot of travelling. If you are fit, affectionate, intelligent, fun, & enjoy an occasional & spontaneous discussion, I would like to hear from you. Please send a long or short letter with your photo if possible. I live in London area but can travel. Reply to Box No 4741

23-3746, CITY professional, median orange, early 40's, friendly, pleasant, seeks slim, attractive, intelligent, successful lady (220/300), please write with photo to Box No 4530

23-3747, MARI slim, grey hair and sensitive, sensitive, intelligent, slim young lady 47, professional, SW down, interested in poetry, intro. art, seeks warm, intelligent, slim woman for meaningful relationship. Box No 4530

23-3748, DECEASED black eyed (wavy) 43, looking for early 30's girl 200-250, lively and fun, house in country for winter. Photo assures a reply. Wish this could be the

Box No 4734
 Female No time. N/S. music
 r. 59 years. 6ft 2. 55kgs.
 hair living Kingsbridge
 Paris, Francophone. Reads
 fr. Seeks serious lady. 25
 for love and marriage.
 Re Reply to Box No 4749

Box No 4749
 Male. Mature prof. slim
 white. passionate. Interests
 include music seeks attrac-
 tive lady for friendship
 a future. Letters to Box
 7540

Box No 4750
 A prof male 42y seeks N/S
 in Francophone to share
 theatre, cinema, music,
 and country pubs. Lpool.
 Re Reply to Box No 4778

27. frequent visitor to
a weeks sometime. Not old
a discrete professional.
interests: Yes; similar.
30. Full reply & photo-
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11

GAMES

23

CHESS

by Raymond Keene

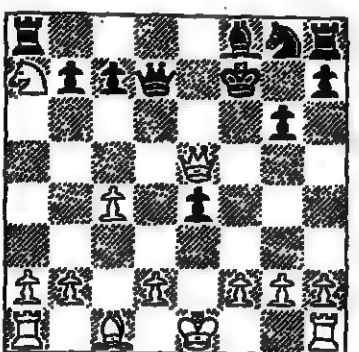
GAMES in simultaneous displays, where a champion takes on several opponents at once, often elude the chess theoreticians. However, concealed in these less formal competitions there are often gems which may have an important bearing on the proper assessments of critical variations. A case in point was this win of Kasparov's, in the ultra-sharp Schliemann variation of the Ruy Lopez.

White: Garry Kasparov
Black: Jean Crowl
Simultaneous Display
Geneva, 1995
Ruy Lopez

1. e4 e5 2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Bb5 a6 4. Bxc6 bxc6

The characteristic move of the Schliemann. Black plays a kind of King's Gambit with reversed colours. Black players who espouse this line are prepared to give up material in exchange for the initiative.

4. Nc3 b5 5. Nxb5 c5
6. Nc3 d4 7. Nc6 Qd5
8. d4 c6 9. Nc7 Bc7
10. Qe2+ g6 11. Bc7+ Qd7
12. Qe3+ Kf7



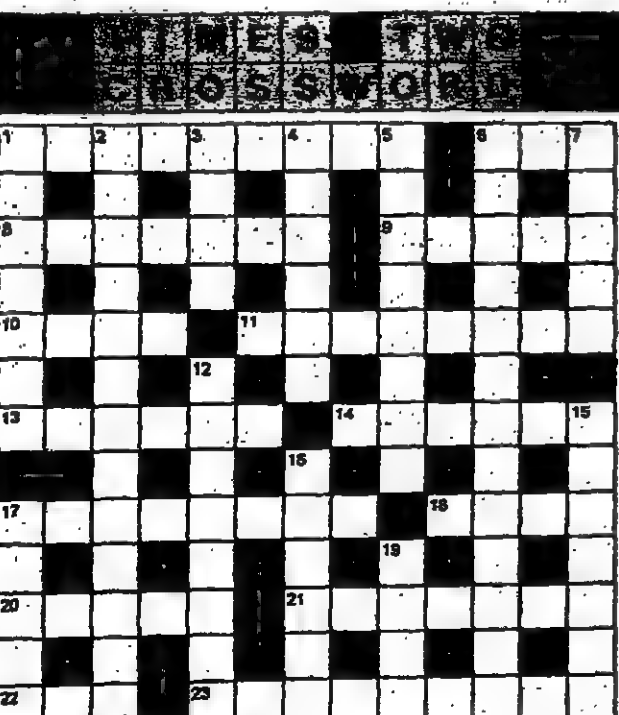
This is still theory. The alternative for White now — 13. Qd3 Nf6 14. Nb5 c6 15. Nc3 Re8 16. b3 Bc5 17. Qxh8+ Kxh8 18. h3 Qd3 — gives Black plenty of counterplay.

An important improvement on known theory. The correspondence game from 1978 between Petruska and Black resigns.

By Raymond Keene
This position is from the game Alekhine - Borochov, Hollywood 1932.
White has just sacrificed a knight to open up lines on the kingside. What was his key winning move? White to play.

Send your answers on a postcard to *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. The first three correct answers drawn on Thursday will win a British Chess Magazine publication. The answer will be published next Saturday.

Last week's solution: 1... Qg2+



No 755

ACROSS
1. Utidly crammed (9)
2. Catch, policeman (slang) (3)
3. Boring (7)
4. Postpone bedtime; show sudden interest (3,2)
5. Little arrow; run quickly (4)
6. Omnipotent (8)
7. Horse entered for race (6)
8. Tolerant; receive (6)
9. Ill-disciplined confusion (8)
10. Miss — Regrets (Cole Porter) (4)
11. Tuft of feathers; highest point (5)
12. Japanese warrior (7)
13. French river; Abraham's nephew, salty wife (3)
14. Down: 1 Bumps, 2 Bilko, 3 Low-key, 4 Baggage, 5 Terrain, 6 Goldlocks, 7 Hindenburg, 8 Brumie, 9 Dab hand, 10 Psyche, 11 Cheer, 12 Undue.

SOLUTION TO NO 754
ACROSS: 1 Bubble bath, 7 Ohm's Law, 8 Girth, 10 Disrobe, 11 Again, 12 Libido, 15 Semest, 17 Crumb, 18 Succumb, 21 Sanna, 22 Cheddar, 23 Dead centre.

DOWN: 1 Bumps, 2 Bilko, 3 Low-key, 4 Baggage, 5 Terrain, 6 Goldlocks, 7 Hindenburg, 8 Brumie, 9 Dab hand, 10 Psyche, 11 Cheer, 12 Undue.

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PUNCHLINE

READERS are invited to write an amusing caption for the cartoon (right). The cartoon, from the Punch library, includes the contemporary caption.

The cartoon will be printed again next week on the Games page with a caption selected from those submitted.

Send caption suggestions on a postcard with your name and address to: Cartoon Caption (104) Weekend Games Page, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.

The editor's decision is final. The closing date for entries is Wednesday, April 17.



After that last cruise, I've brought my own plumber with me on this one.
The winning caption for last week's cartoon (above) was submitted by H. G. Gough, of Weobley, Hereford & Worcester.

IF YOU live on London's Isle of Dogs, the following may come as a surprise: look at the picture, you will now find you live south of the river. Who did this to you? Good old Microsoft.

Bill Gates's company has one of the most respected multimedia catalogues in the business; it should have, since it is so rich it can snap up any title which takes its fancy. Microsoft did this with AutoRoute Express, an expert British atlas and route-mapping programme which was originally released by NewBase.

In Microsoft's hands the title received a dizzy makeover — pictures and sound effects were added — and in the process the good people of the Isle of Dogs were swept southwards. Instead of bordering M25, they are now neighbours of Greenwich. Perhaps the error has forced a few sales representatives already who swept into London a second Docklands seminars but found themselves lost and puzzled, incredulously staring at their laptops.

Getting a single destination wrong in a premium-priced high-tech atlas seems one mistake too many. Why plan a journey on one programme if you need another to check its existence?

Several people have spotted the mistake and phoned Microsoft to point out where they are straying: apologies from the company and promises of the next corrected update as a replacement followed.

Cyberspace Twenty-Three explores further the world of great software dangers, typos and howlers. Have you ever come across any software mistakes which have amused you or, worse, made your blood boil? To enter the competition, write to us with details of a goof or mistake that you have spotted in any game or multimedia title, which you should name clearly. Alternatively, send us your favourite computer joke.

The competition is open to all ages, and the three funniest entries will scoop US Gold software bursaries, which include the games Riddle of Master La, Chronomaster, Tech War, Comanche vs Werewolf as well as Johnny B. Goats, plus the history of flight reference on CD-Rom, Dreams of Flight. Send your entries, together with your name, age, address and home telephone number, to: Cyberspace Twenty-Three, Com-

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

HONDA
a. A boss
b. National shame
c. An eye

MORAN
a. Young warriors
b. The blueberry
c. Young warriors

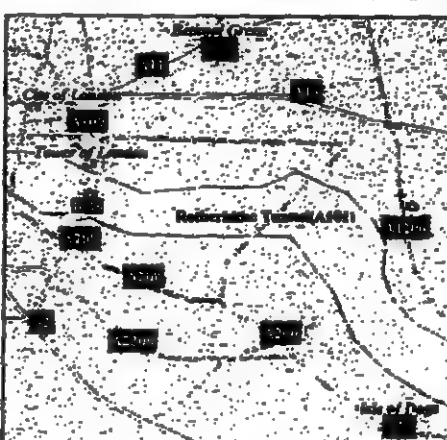
NARC
a. A police informer
b. A narcotics agent
c. Actors' talcum powder

KELPIE
a. A sheep-dog
b. A collector of seaweed
c. A house-cleaning ploy

Answers on page 17

COMPUTER GAMES AND PASTIMES

by Tim Wapshott



puter Games, Weekend, The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. You may also fax entries to us on 0171-729 6791. The competition closes at midnight on Tuesday April 30 1996, and the judges will not enter into additional correspondence.

When NextBase first came out with AutoRoute Express, it was a breakthrough aid for anyone having to drive regularly around Britain. Auto-mapping has progressed in leaps and bounds since

then, and motorists can currently rely on constantly updated electronic trackers. Some gadgets even show your exact location through satellite links. Up against this kind of backdrop, the Automobile Association's release of (A) to (B) seems slow off the mark.

The humble title, out on Windows floppy disk, deduces recommended routes with written instructions. There is no atlas option to let you check a suggested route on the map, as you can do in AutoRoute Express, but it does have a better facility to help to work out your travelling expenses.

The Isle of Dogs doesn't feature as a destination in (A) to (B), nor does it feature on another AA CD-Rom, The Hotel & Restaurant Guide. Although this title lists 4,000 hotels and 1,500 restaurants taken from two current AA guides, it is eclectic, incomplete, and far less satisfying than just thumbing through the books. The programme has a formal yet unclear menu interface, and some entries don't even give the distance and show their exact location on the map pages.

If thoughts of hitting the open

road have never appealed, how about hitting ever-decreasing circles? From Thames & Hudson and due out next month, Escher Interactive will draw you into the intriguing art of the Dutch guru. Maurits Cornelis Escher hit the big time in 1951 and, until 1969, was responsible for an endless stream of captivating pictures, most typically toying with infinity and architectural impossibility.

Thought-provoking, thoroughly absorbing and intelligently crafted, this is the definitive Escher exploration. A date line allows access to all aspects of the alarmingly modest graphic-artist genius. Video footage and succinct commentary combine to relate the story of Escher's life, and the gallery of his work is so extensive that it speaks for itself. Six pictures can be animated, and perspective is tackled with a rare clarity.

You can make your own Escheresque pictures, as well as experiment with simple morphing. The two visual riddle games, Concave & Convex and Impossible Puzzles, are fun but forgettable.

"Driving is a spectacular form of amnesia. Everything is to be discovered, everything to be obliterated," Jean Baudrillard (1986).

THE LISTENER CROSSWORD

No 3353: Knights' Tour by Wolfram

THE two knights, A and B, make a tour of the grid. Their progress is by means of knight's moves and each knight visits each square in the grid once only. Thus every square is visited exactly twice. The knights take different continuous paths and these paths are mirror images of each other. The lights are entered so that they stop one move before the next numbered/lettered square, with the next light continuing from the respectively marked square.

Knight A

- Fellow that is small in the Shetlands (6)
- Modified leaf caught in old apron (5)
- Ring old English bird (6)
- Venerable object to add space (5)
- Bread's all eaten by grandma (4)
- Quizzes donkey held by bodyguard (6)
- Coarse bridal arrangement (6)
- Lament to take place on little piano (6)
- Flakes of dirt must be scattered south (5)
- Most complicated unit of magnetic flux (5)
- Starts to appreciate leading tenor singing high notes (4)
- Kelvin within right to represent as the same (5)
- A word against a scrap of verse (5)
- Amalgam of copper and mercury producing a dull explosion (4)
- Enlarged cells — endless binary system (4)
- Intuitively holds back old war-god (5)
- Satisfy a small appetite, indeed (5)
- Trap let out stinger (6)
- See coloured heifer, a rare servile follower (7)
- Marijuana served as light refreshment (3)
- Thanks liberal King for short address (4)
- Wavy star established liquid fuel energy (7)
- Graduate in hurried change of light frequency — producing this effect (5)
- Last two notes of scale nearly at the end (4)
- Large lizard taking grant from crazed gargantuan (5)
- Look back, in South Africa, for French author (4)

- Local man to call uninvited (5)
- Public showing — direct from the Post Office (4)
- Violently the French go on irritating (6)

Knight B

- Independent existence — shame about the Irish (8)
- Horribly a learner after a very quiet start (5)
- Mini designer to show doubt about fixed minimum (7)
- Poetic evening in, to promote poem by Virgil (6)
- Scots shall wear out their national flag (7)
- Variety performer takes in work, he's a boring Australian (6)
- Card player to lead, and follow partner — a meek follower — (3)
- nearly useless against the ace of clubs (5)
- Unfinished, tense letter (3)
- Shrewd return of mere trifle by backward townie (7)
- Completely unknown supporter (4)
- Knitter makes small ornamental piece (7)
- Extra amount, additional to a century (7)
- A Greek who hid in the mountains that split we hear (6)
- Sly character in twisted lace to make a billiards shot (9)
- Armadillo a little tense at the Open University (5)
- Small tree from Lake Edward? (4)
- Abnormal contraction of pupil — note zero convulsion (6)
- Unknown worker (amateur) used to thicken food (7)
- Region surrounding Ohio lake — a slightly sunken spot (6)
- Allen amongst the French lists of candidates (5)
- Snag to exist following return of pet rabbits (6)
- Zaire soldiers capture railway enthusiasts (7)
- Kiss and cuddle in rickety old canoe (8)

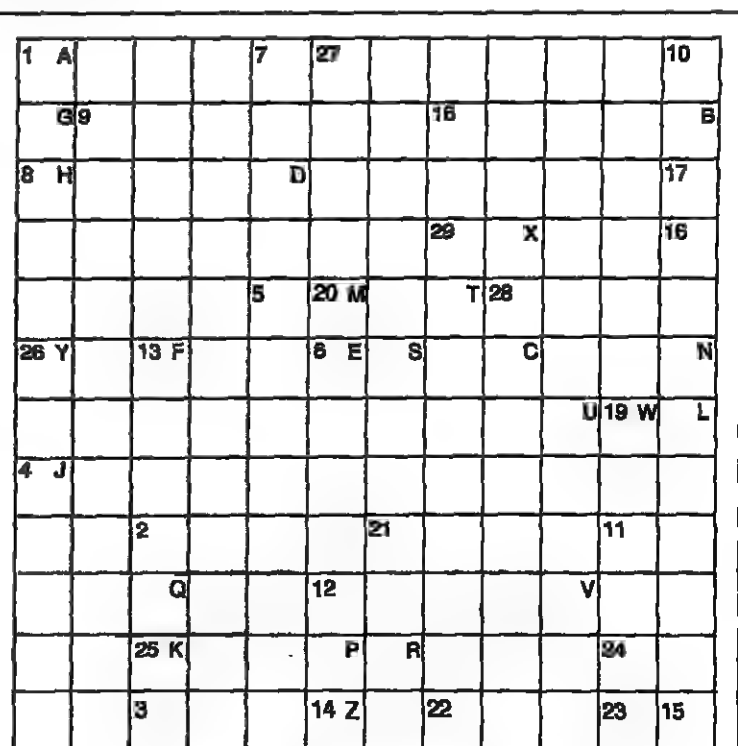
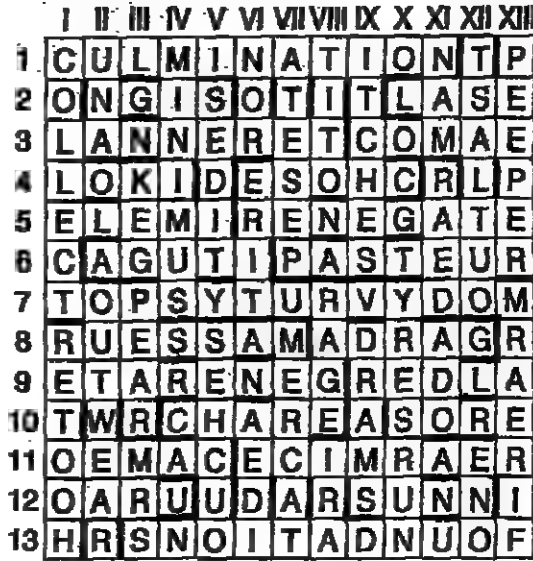
Solution to 3350

Up and Down by Doubleshooter

"CULMINATION" must be at the top of the diagram and "FOUNDATIONS" at the bottom. Some solvers may have noticed that, in the completed grid, PREPER doubles (ie is the counterpart of) HOOTER, hence Doubleshooter.

• The winner is Mrs J. Walker of Crowthorne, Berkshire. The runners-up are Dr J. Sloan of Carrikeriggs, Co Antrim, and J. S. Stone-Fox of South Cave, East Yorkshire.

• Statistics relating to 1995 crosswords, including personal record, are available in senders of an SAE (220mm x 110mm; from overseas, stamp exempt) to J.E. Green, 31 Bishopric Court, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 1TD.



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CONCLUSION

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Thi

For Marlboro
Men, the Dodge
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Loring Eason

heard it a little
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...strained against the
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...put up with more than
...in the end through a series
...of events."

by Marjorie Mann and
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and go to bed.
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to the end of the beach.
the only reason

light of a low-mounted
in the Dodge Room
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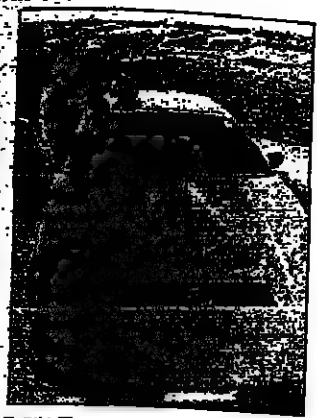
ST. LOUIS, Mo., Sept. 10. — The
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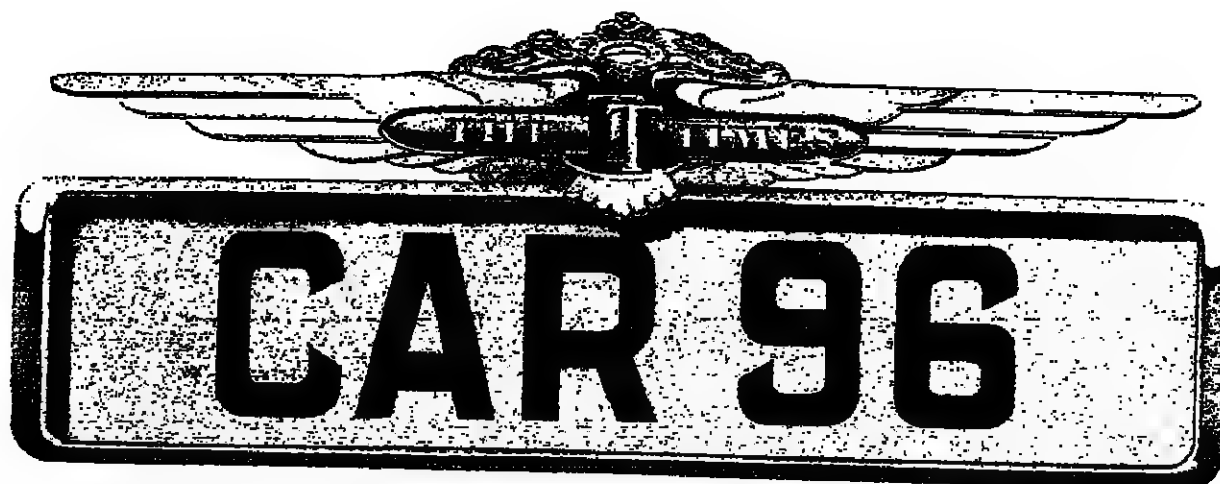
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My other transport is the MGF with wings
Page 8



Tracing the tyre tracks of motoring history
Page 3



SATURDAY APRIL 13 1996

This thing is bigger than both of us

For Marlboro Man, the Dodge Ram is fine. But Kevin Eason found it a little on the large side

There was only one way to end the squeal of rubber as the tyres scrubbed against the narrow kerbs: I turned the stereo up. After all, what is a man to do when he is trying to get a pick-up truck more than 7ft 9ins wide through a road less than 8ft across?

Exactly. Here was I detailed to test a vehicle normally driven by Marlboro Man and I had to get from one end of London to the other. I get streets built for Dinky toys. Marlboro Man had the whole of Arizona to go at.

This was like trying to squeeze the toothpaste back into the tube, only noisier... and in front of a bemused audience, for the Dodge Ram is not exactly a shy and retiring little vehicle, the sort you can discreetly park and walk away without anyone noticing. Park the Ram and most of the city knows about it: mothers send their children out to watch because it could be more entertaining than Power Rangers, more informative than Blue Peter, office workers take their tea breaks around its arrival and even traffic wardens send back to base for extra ink just in case they get the chance to write their all-time biggest ticket.

We are talking American here, as in BIG... VERY BIG; the sort of vehicle that takes a city block to turn and generates enough power to put the Space Shuttle into orbit. The mouthful of name badges said it all: this was a Dodge Ram 3500 V10 Magnum Laramie 3LT. You would need a long vehicle just to accommodate that much sticker space — and I had the Dodge Ram, which was not just as wide as the Grand Canyon, but 18½ft long and the best part of 7ft tall, counting the array of four floodlights on top of the cab.

There is no way the Ram would go into our local NCP, entertain a parking spot unless it was for two normal-sized vehicles or negotiate ordinary streets where a man on a bike becomes a major obstruction.

And under that bonnet was no clattering diesel, just an 8-litre V10 with 300 brake horse power — the equivalent of roping together three Escorts and lashing them to the giant red bodywork.

The Ram was built for the Great Outdoors, for the open skies and the long, straight roads of the mid-West — not the one-way system through Watford and the tortuous entrance to Sainsbury's car park.

Americans adore the Ram — in fact, they love all kinds of pick-ups. Pick-up trucks account for three of the five best-selling vehicles in the US this year. Number one in the sales charts is the Ford F-series, followed by the Chevrolet CK with the Dodge Ram at number five. Ford has sold 314,000



Rambo: the Dodge Ram 3500 V10 Magnum Laramie 3LT — crazy name, crazy car — generates enough power to put the Space Shuttle into orbit, but in a London street a man on a bike becomes a major obstruction

DODGE RAM
Price: £21,710.
Engine: Eight-litre, 20-valve V10, for 300bhp at 4,000rpm, 5-speed gearbox, 4-wheel-drive/low-ratio gearbox.
Performance: 0-60mph in about 8.5 seconds, top speed 112mph.
Fuel economy: There isn't any.
Equipment: Superlative stereo, cruise control, driver's airbag and enough lamps to floodlight Old Trafford.



but Rawlinson's words, seared into my brain, fired me into reality like a shot from Colt 45: "Normally we say a vehicle can be replaced, it's the occupants that matter, but with the Ram we are willing to make an exception." Guilt.

A press of the throttle and the Ram surged forward, bouncing on its long suspension struts like a speedboat nosing into the waves. But the power came smoothly, pushing the huge truck into the rear view mirrors of drivers ahead who must have thought they were being trailed by Smokey and the Bandit.

All I needed now was the cactus and the red mountains, so I could pull up and survey the desert like Marlboro Man, grey smoke spiralling from the tip of my cigarette, my eyes squinting against the glare of the bright sun.

Actually I pulled my hat down against the drizzle as I parked against the hillocks of Hertfordshire and unwrapped a toffee. Maybe I should face the fact I'm just not cut out to be a Ram driver...

little smaller. I mean, I approached the Ram in the best spirit, deciding to go native with the Marlboro Man look to fit the Marlboro Man's pick-up. I held my breath to get into a pair of tight blue jeans, put on a neat, checked lumberjack shirt and topped off with the 10-gallon hat and intimidating shades. Climbing the 2½ft on to the steel running board to get into the cab wearing the

tight jeans was a bit of a challenge (was Marlboro Man rendered impotent by his Levis, I wonder), but once inside, the cabin — designed by Brit Trevor Creed — had plenty of hat room.

There might only be a cosy three-bench seat, but the steering wheel was as familiar as a car's, with buttons for cruise control, while the stereo was better than the one in my

living room. The manual gear shift was straight from a truck though and the gearing on first so low that I never used it. Town running usually needed only second or third, so great was the torque from the engine that comes straight out of Dodge's legendary Viper sports car.

All that power — and that sheer size... Yeah hah! (If I might quote the words of Clint

Eastwood, a popular character actor in films of the Wild West genre.) He would have whipped his saddle and kicked his spurs as the Ram left a trail of dust across the desert. I was off down the Holloway Road, and I started with the warnings of Rawlinson and his Chrysler crew ringing in my ears.

In the letter covering the loan of the vehicle, Rawlinson

made no bones about the fact that the Ram was a rarity in Britain and its power was not to be toyed with. "The cost of any abuse of the rear tyres will be passed to the journalist to whom the loan was made." I recalled as the Ram squeaked its way down that back lane behind the offices of *The Times*, rear wheels scrubbing along the narrow track.

At last on to the open road,

Which will you choose? New, or timeless?



Mercedes-Benz
Used Cars

For more information, call 0800 010107

AA GRIDLOCK GUIDE

■ LONDON
A12 Eastern Avenue, Wansford. Construction of M11 link road continues. With eastbound reduced to a single lane between the Redbridge roundabout and High Street.
A214 Leatherhead bypass. Kerbing and alteration work at junction with Kingston Road.
A310 London Road, Twickenham. Bridge reconstruction work between Crane Avenue and Cole Park Gardens.
A406 North Circular Road, Upper Edmonton. Major roadworks continue over Lea Valley viaduct.
A400 Tottenham Court Road. Resurfacing between Goodge Street and Grafton Way.
A501 Marylebone Road. Various restrictions around Baker Street and Great Portland Street junctions.

■ SOUTH-EAST
M1 Bedfordshire. Lane closures northbound, between junctions 10 and 12.
A509 Buckinghamshire. Major roadworks on Wellesborough Road in Olney, at junction with Lavendon Road.
A35 Hampshire. Lane closures eastbound for roadworks between the Rushington roundabout and Redbridge Interchange.
A36 Hampshire. Bridge repairs at Wellow, north-west of Southampton.
A41 Hertfordshire. Roadworks on North Western Avenue near Corns roundabout.
A249 Kent. Major works at Stockbury roundabout west of Sittingbourne.
M25 Surrey. Two sections of widening work, with lane closures and contraflows between junctions 6 and 8 and 8 and 10.
A247 Surrey. Roadworks between Clondan Station and Clondan Park.

■ SOUTH-WEST
M4/M5 Avon. Work on second Severn crossing continues, with restrictions around the Almondsbury & Aust interchanges, and also on the M5 around junction 18.
M5 Bristol. Lane closures in both directions between junctions 17 and 20 for strengthening of the Avonmouth Bridge.
A373 Devon. Temporary lights between Culmpton and Keepers Cottage.
A381 Devon. Roadworks continue in Teignmouth between Salcombe Dip and Inverleigh Drive.
M5 Somerset. Contraflow at junction 23.

■ MIDLANDS AND EAST ANGLIA
A6 Leicestershire. Major roadworks and contraflow at Lockington, between junction 24 of the M1 and Sawley Island.

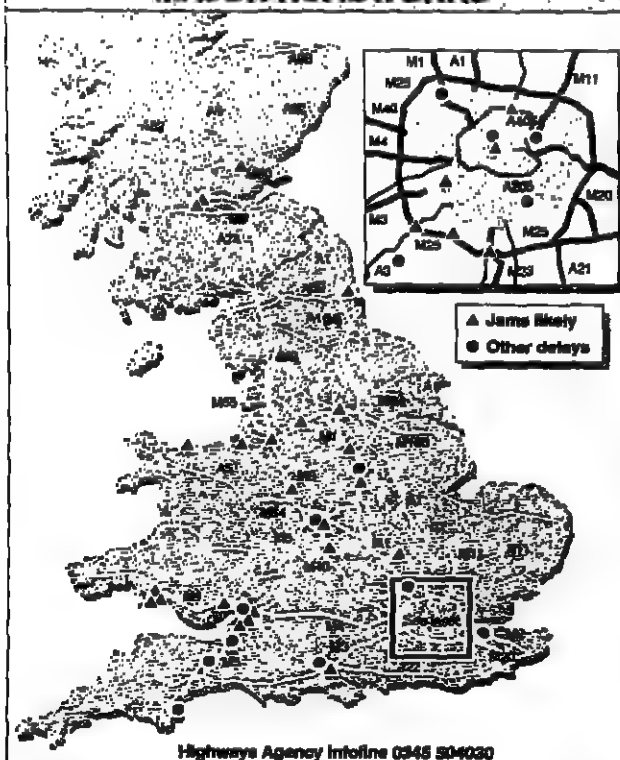
M6 Staffordshire. North and southbound entry sliproads on to motorway closed at junction 11 for work on A460.
M1 Nottinghamshire. Off-peak lane closures in both directions at junction 25 due to the installation of lights on the entry/exit slip roads.
M40 Warwickshire. Various northbound hard shoulder restrictions between junctions 14 and 15.
A45 West Midlands. Slip road from Birmingham Road to The Windmill Hill closed.
A4041 West Midlands. Contraflow on Newton Road for bridge rebuilding work.

■ NORTH
M6 Cheshire. Widening work continues between junctions 20 and 21.
A5063 Greater Manchester. Major roadworks and lane closures on Trafford Road near junction with Pomona Strand.
A630 South Yorkshire. Major roadworks and contraflow on the Rotherway at Canklow, between junction 33 of the M1 and Rotherham.
A167M Tyndesside. Northbound lane closures on Newcastle central motorway near Jesmond Road interchange for bridge repairs.
M1 West Yorkshire. Roadworks and contraflow at end of motorway at junction 47.

■ WALES
A550 Chwyd. Narrow lanes and 40mph limit for construction of a new interchange. One lane closed southbound during the week between 9.30am and 3.30pm and on Saturdays between 9.30am and 1.00pm.
M4 Gwent. Widening work continues in connection with second Severn crossing between junctions 22 and 24.
A547 Gwynedd. Bridge repairs with lights near A55 junction at Llandudno Junction.
M4 South West Wales. Contraflow between junctions 45 and 46 for resurfacing work.
A48 West Glamorgan. Construction work with lane closures on all approaches to the Wychtree roundabout at Morriston.
A483 West Glamorgan. Major roadworks and contraflow on the Fabian Way, Swansea between Elba Crescent and Earlswood lights.

■ SCOTLAND
M8 Strathclyde. Lane restrictions westbound at junction 15. Carriageway is down to three narrow lanes, so long delays expected.
A77 South Ayrshire. Temporary lights in place for resurfacing work.
A749 Strathclyde. Dalmarnock Bridge. Glasgow closed southbound for repairs.
M90 Tayside. Major roadworks at junction 10 with lane closures in both directions.

MAJOR ROADWORKS



NEWS IN BRIEF

Brit in charge

VAUXHALL gets its first British boss for the best part of a decade. Nick Reilly has taken over as chairman and managing director, succeeding two Americans and an Australian. Reilly, 46, was born in Anglesey and has worked in the US and Mexico for General Motors as well as running Vauxhall's Ellesmere Port plant on Merseyside.

Art with a capital E

SOME cars are born great and go on to be works of art, according to the Museum of Modern Art in New York. The museum just bought a 1963 blue Jaguar E-type, one of only three considered to be beautiful enough to be exhibited at one of the world's most famous temples to art. Terence Riley, curator, says he developed a "wish list" of cars — with the E-type at the top.

Halewood green

THE HALEWOOD plant on Merseyside, which makes Ford's Escort, is the first in the company's worldwide empire to win an award for its environmental work. Ford challenged its plants to clean up emissions and production processes but Halewood, which can make 1,000 Escorts a day, was first of the 150 factories around the world to qualify.

Daewoo price rise

DAEWOO prices have gone up, with the base Nexia GLI 3-door now at £8,795. The top-of-the-range Espero 2.0 CDXi is £12,995, although Daewoo says there are no "extras" to pay, such as delivery charges or number plates, while all cars come with a tank of fuel, a year's road tax and three-year/60,000-mile warranty.

Mitsubishi success

MITSUBISHI sales in Britain were up 50 per cent in March and are ahead 34 per cent so far this year over the same period of 1995, mainly thanks to the introduction of the new European-built Carisma range.

For a minor DIY service you now need a pile of microchips and the home telephone number of Bill Gates

An automatic waste of time

Many years ago, when the England cricket team still won occasionally, there arrived a defining moment in my relationship with gadgets. Nearly all men love them, and I am no exception, so the test of a useless gadget is when even a man exclaims: "What the hell is the point of that?"

In my case this exclamation followed the reading of a newspaper article which announced that the electric toothbrush had gone on sale in Britain. It contained a memorable quote from the manufacturers: "Our children will one day see ordinary toothbrushes in a museum and ask us what they were for."

Happily, this absurd prediction proved to be wide of the mark. But it came to mind one morning this week when, for the umpteenth time, I forgot to activate the automatic choke and my car's engine spat and spluttered, juddered and fell silent.

The automatic choke is a classic example of how the car industry treats its customers like children. Cars used to have a button that you

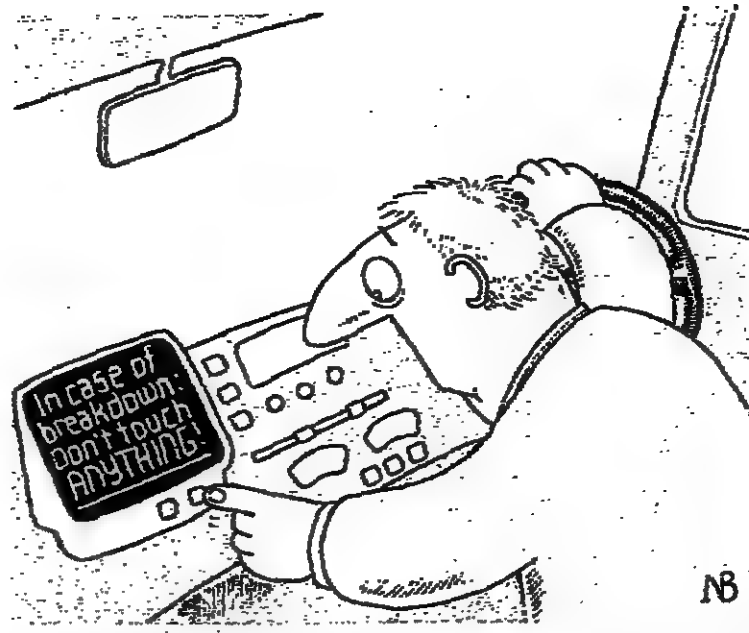
DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



Peter Barnard

pulled out when the engine was cold and pushed in when it warmed up. New drivers occasionally flooded the engine until they got the hang of it, but otherwise manual chokes worked perfectly well.

Nowadays, cars have fuel injection and electronic ignition so that the choking system is built in. As the mechanic at my local garage said: "They did it to get rid of human error. So now all you've got to worry about is mechanical error."



Exactly so. Of course, the carmakers claim that it all has to do with emission regulations, which is complete tosh. An automatic choke cuts out at a certain engine temperature, no different from the temperature at which one would close a manual choke. If you did not close it, the engine would stall.

The truth about automatic chokes is the same as the wider truth about "engine management systems", which is in fact a licence to print

money. Have a look under the bonnet. Fancy doing a minor service? You'll need a couple of things you wouldn't have needed ten years ago. One is a pile of microchips (no, they don't have them in Halfords) and the other is the home telephone number of Bill Gates, the chairman of Microsoft. Without those two, forget it. You could, if you insist, check the oil and the water, because the carmakers have yet to devise a way of preventing ordinary mortals

from getting at these areas. But it's only a matter of time.

THE END of the Easter school holidays will bring the usual queues and chaos to our motorways. At Easter itself, the AA announced over television news footage of a jammed M40 that soon all our motorways will look like this, all the time.

Now this is a silly statement. I should point out that I happen to belong to the RAC, but that organisation is equally prone to doom-mongering. Lobby groups are the last people we should listen to in these circumstances.

I am as wedded to the motor car as the next person, but I believe a sea change is occurring. I have already stopped travelling to London by car and switched to the railways. Thousands, if not millions, will be doing the same over the next few years.

It all boils down to the balance of convenience. In exchange for the personal freedom of a car, we will tolerate a considerable degree of inconvenience. But there is a point where the scales tip and individuals tend to act en masse and switch to something more convenient.

The Government may pronounce, scaremongers predict doom, environmentalists swing through trees at Newbury. None of this matters a jot. Left to ourselves, we shall solve the problem of road congestion by taking matters into our own hands.

Save now, pay later

What may seem a bargain in the showroom could cost more in the long run, warns Kevin Eason

Buying the cheapest car in the showroom can be a false economy, according to a study by one of Britain's biggest vehicle leasing companies. Cowie Interleasing studied its file of company cars to discover which was cheapest and found that writing the smallest cheque to purchase was not automatically the way to lower whole-life costs.

The cheapest car to run on sale in Britain is still Fiat's Cinquecento — the tiny 900cc hatchback that has helped redefine the trends for small city cars. Although it loses nothing to rivals around town in terms of performance, its fuel economy is challenged only by diesel cars, while the sub-£6,000 purchase price remains an attraction.

Even Daewoo is unable to challenge the market leaders when it comes to running costs, despite the South Korean manufacturer's determination to keep maintenance costs down by offering free servicing for the first three years of the car's life. The Daewoo Nexia GLX, which cost £9,745 at the time of the Cowie survey, would cost companies 20.91p a mile to run, compared with a Ford Escort 1.3, which is listed at 20.34p in spite of costing nearly £300 more to buy than the Daewoo.

The Seat Ibiza 1.0CL looks a good buy at £6,920, says the company, against competition including Rover's 111 SLI at £8,146, the Vauxhall Corsa 1.5 diesel at £8,145, Citroën's AX 1.5 diesel or the Nissan Micra 1.0LX. £9,100 at the time of the survey. But all proved cheaper to run, using the Cowie formula. While the Ibiza cost 18.91p a mile to keep on the road, the evergreen Metro came in at 18.07p, the Corsa at 17.75p, the British-built Micra at 18.62p and Citroën 17.41p.

Cowie says more than just price is at play. Resale values can seriously colour the worth of some models, with the cheapest cars more than halving in value as soon as they are driven out of the showroom. A check on future residual values in the authoritative Cap Monitor shows that a Daewoo Nexia saloon could be worth just 45 per cent of its new price after a year on the road, owners of a Cinquecento could expect to see their cars get as high as 66 per cent of value when they came to change it after a year.

The rate of depreciation is also marked. The Cinquecento is predicted to fall in value in steps to 52 per cent of new price at two years old, 34 at three and 26 at four. Compare that with Cap's predictions for the Nexia of 35 per cent, 25 and 18 at the same ages.

Cowie says that higher depreciation and maintenance costs as well as poorer fuel economy take their toll, which means that over 60,000 miles, the Citroën, for example, would prove 900 cheaper to run than the Seat.

Neil Pykett, Cowie Interleasing's managing director,



	PRICE	ENGINE	FUEL COST	COST PER MILE
Fiat Cinquecento 6	£ 5,825	800	£ 2,040	15.58
Renault 5 1.1 Prima	£ 5,975	1300	£ 2,582	17.74
Seat Ibiza 1.0 CL	£ 6,920	1043	£ 2,583	18.91
Vauxhall Corsa 1.0	£ 7,820	1043	£ 3,182	18.88
Rover 111 1.1 SLI	£ 7,776	1275	£ 3,889	18.71
Ford Escort 1.1 5 D	£ 7,846	1527	£ 2,634	16.68
Fiat Punto 1.0	£ 7,989	1608	£ 3,182	18.82
Citroën AX 1.5 Diesel	£ 8,080	1527	£ 3,080	17.41
Vauxhall Corsa 1.5 Diesel	£ 8,145	1498	£ 2,733	17.75
Rover 100 1.1 SLI	£ 8,146	1118	£ 3,183	18.07
Hyundai Accent 1.3 GLS	£ 8,396	1341	£ 3,125	19.24
Seat Ibiza 1.4 Salin	£ 8,925	1301	£ 3,766	20.81
Proton MP1 1.3 GLS	£ 9,005	1286	£ 3,884	20.28
Nissan Micra 1.0 LX	£ 9,700	886	£ 2,997	18.62
Daewoo Nexia GLX	£ 9,745	1406	£ 3,182	20.91
Fiat Tipo 1.4 S	£ 9,815	1372	£ 3,866	20.44
Ford Escort 1.3	£ 9,988	1381	£ 4,194	21.66
Renault Clio 1.5 Diesel	£ 10,015	1297	£ 3,686	20.34
Peugeot 306 1.4 10X	£ 10,190	1670	£ 2,886	19.36
	£ 10,825	1300	£ 3,582	20.71



costly to run

rate with the driver covering between 2,500 and 18,000 business miles a year.

Cowie concentrated on small cars in its annual *Company Car Comparisons Guide* because they are likely to play a greater role in company choice as traffic congestion worsens and fuel economy becomes more important.

Pykett adds: "In the near future, we will see most of the world's volume carmakers moving into the ultra-economy, small car-about-town. Some private sector companies are already looking

tween Fiat at the bottom and Mazda at the top.

While a Fiat cost on average just £350 to repair, a Mazda cost £791. In between, Land Rovers cost £378, Peugeot £430, Ford £439, Rover £448, Vauxhall £468, Volvo £479, Jaguar £516, Citroën £520, Volkswagen £574, Nissan £594, Renault £609, Mercedes-Benz £618, BMW £694, Audi £714, Toyota £729, Saab £781, and Honda £791.

Calculations like those from Cowie could matter a lot when the market for new cars is in a state of turmoil. While sales to private buyers continue to struggle, sales of fleet cars are ahead with companies seemingly happy to invest in vehicles in spite of Britain's missing "feel-good" factor.

Alan Polham, director of the National Franchised Dealers Association, blames the lack of private sales on carmakers pitching their prices too high, which deters many who would simply prefer to wait and buy motors at a year or two old but at much lower prices.

"As an industry, we are failing to deliver the message that a car is excellent value for money," he says. "Private car purchases will continue to slide until manufacturers return to a realistic pricing policy. The fleet and business market continue to prop up the figures, but low profit margins and falling resale values on volume products are not the best way to sustain the industry in the long term."

How and where customers buy their cars could be as important in the future as what they buy and how much they pay though. Daewoo decided early on to attack the traditional notions of car buying: customers going to a one-make showroom, their minds almost made up before they shop because they have chosen that one dealership above all others. The purchase usually requires a special trip — but not if Daewoo has its way.

Having sited showrooms in out-of-town shopping centres, the company has now linked up with a supermarket chain. The first super-salesroom is at the Savacentre at London Colney, Hertfordshire. As shoppers wheel out their trolleys, they can check on Daewoo, using touch-screen computers, and there is one car in the showroom and six more in the car park.

If the idea takes off, shopping might never be the same again with a trip to the supermarket for frozen peas and two bottles of Chardonnay also including a quick look at the latest motoring models.

● Cowie's *Company Car Comparisons Guide* is available on 0345-585840, or send an A1 size to Cowie Interleasing, Icknield Fort Road, Birmingham B16 0BE.

Diane is left in a hole with her Polo

Tony Dawe on an impasse



Diane Gilbert Scott has owned her Volkswagen Polo for more than six months but driven it for only 12 days — the rest of the time it has been under repair or parked on her drive.

The story is the latest to join Car 96's burgeoning file of cars from Hell and could take longer than most to resolve as she and Volkswagen have reached an impasse which will require an expert diplomat rather than a customer services manager to end.

As soon as she drove her new car away from Blade Motor Company of Gloucestershire last September, she thought the gearbox was stiff. Twelve days later, it started to pack up. No matter how she pushed and pulled, it was impossible to select reverse. She took the car back to Blade, but within days the gears had gone again.

The garage attempted further repairs, but when the Polo was returned to Diane's home in Stroud, Gloucestershire, she told the mechanic after a test drive that it was still unsatisfactory.

When her husband, Peter, took it for a test run, he found he couldn't select first or second gear and had the hair-raising experience of negotiating roundabouts in driving sleet in third.

A technical inspection by the RAC confirmed the car could present the driver with a potentially hazardous driving situation. Blade offered to send a transporter to pick it up for more tests but, on the advice of solicitors recommended by the RAC, Diane was only prepared to allow VW to inspect the car in her driveway in the presence of an RAC technical expert.

"I want a new car," she says. "I am totally dissatisfied with VW and Blade. They have had two attempts to put things right and failed. I have a dog car and want it replaced."

Under the new Sale of Goods Act of January, 1995, I am entitled to a replacement car, but significantly, in the VW sales material they quoted the previous Act.

A spokesman for VW says: "Our customer care department is talking to her and we hope we can resolve the problem, but it is very difficult if we cannot have proper access. We are quite prepared to give her a vehicle of equal value while we take the Polo away to rectify it."

AUTOFAX by David Long and Les Evans

AUTOCAR MAGAZINE ONCE REPORTED THAT CONSUMERS' MOTORISTS COST THE U.S. ONE BILLION GALLONS OF PETROL A YEAR...

IN 1906 CHARLES GARDNER DROVE HIS NUMBER 4, 900MILES ALONG THE RAILWAY LINES FROM BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS TO BIRMINGHAM, BECOMING DERANGED JUST 50MILES FROM BIRMINGHAM...

THE AA ANNOUNCED ITS MILLIONTH MEMBER IN 1950. HRH PRINCE ANDREW, THEN Aged 18, WAS THE FIRST...

PETROL COSTS ONLY 190 PER LITRE IN VIETNAM, BUT A BASIC TOYOTA COROLLA GETS 300 MILLION DONG (NEARLY £50,000)...

Thanks to readers of *Car 96*, the list of Coventry's missing heritage is much shorter. Tony Dawe reports

A city's wheels of history that still turn

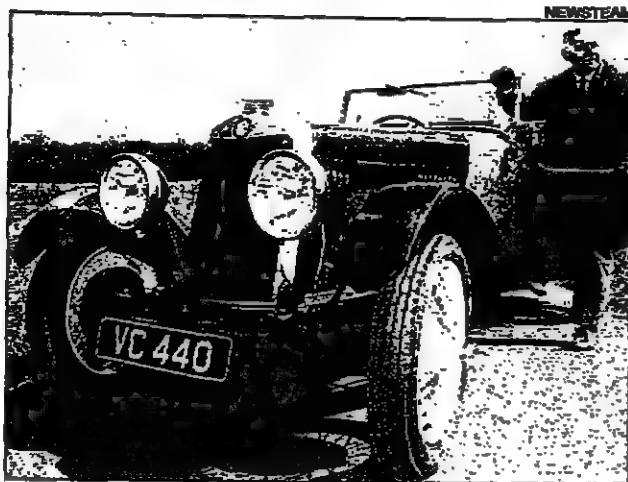
The search for the missing Coventry cars, launched by *Car 96* three weeks ago, has inspired readers to comb attics for memorabilia, dust off old photograph albums and even present models that motor historians thought they would never see.

Many did not realise that the cars they possessed — or used to own — are rare, and most had bought them in their youth in the 1940s and 1950s when they "could not afford anything better".

The hunt was started to help officials in Coventry to find as many makes as possible to feature in the centenary year of the British industry. Of the 132 carmakers which had set up in the city in the past 100 years, they could find only 40 whose models had survived. The missing list is now shorter and vital clues have been provided to help trace some of the more elusive models. Historians have learnt of cars they didn't know they were looking for and one reader has even offered the city's Museum of British Road Transport two rare Coventry-made cars.

In launching the hunt, *Car 96* featured Cluley, a 1920s manufacturer whose models seemed to have disappeared completely, and two historic cars: the Hillman Straight 8 Segrave, named after the legendary racing driver of the 1920s and from the well-known maker absorbed by bigger companies; and the Lea-Francis Hyper, one of which triumphed in the 1928 Ulster TT race, from a company that expired in 1954.

Readers were quick on the trail of the Cluley and we have been told of nine in existence, including one owned jointly by the grandson of the company's founder and his cousin (see below). While still searching for the Hyper, we have at least



MOTOR CITY COVENTRY

found a Lea-Francis, which was built for the 1929 Le Mans 24-hour race and is now owned by Nick Alexander, but the Segrave Hillman remains elusive.

Bill Stirling, artistic and administrative director of the Young Persons Concert Foundation, recalled buying an early 1930s Hillman Vortic Straight 8 some 30 years ago. "I was a young and impecunious car fan in those days and eventually found the vehicle too involved to restore and gave it away," he said.

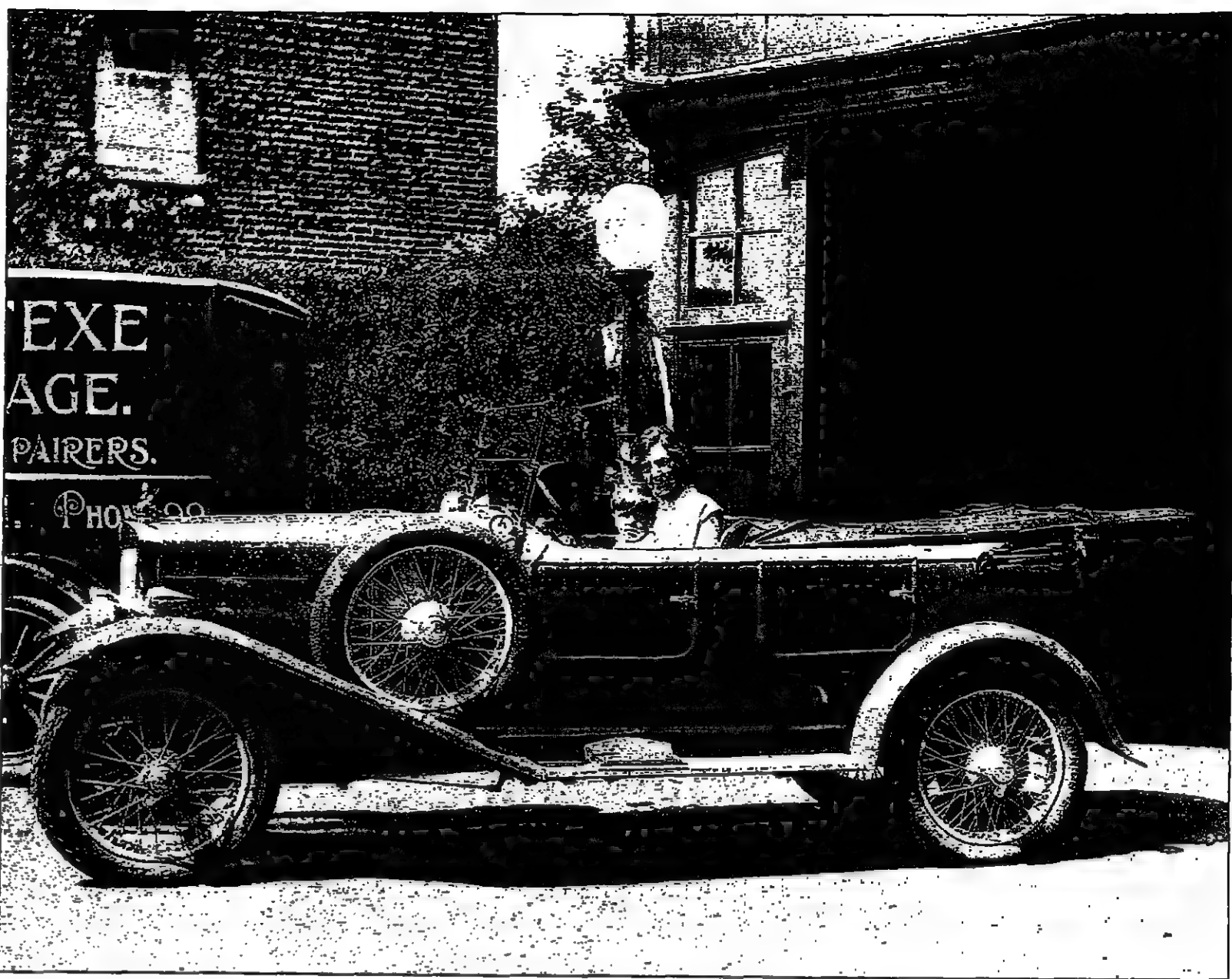
"But I have heard of it since then. After a picture appeared in *Classic Car* in April 1985, a Mr Hopper wrote asking if I knew what had happened to all the wood trim as he was hoping to restore the car. I put him in touch with the person who I thought had last removed the woodwork."

David Mortimer wrote from Budleigh Salterton, Devon, that he had bought a Hillman Segrave coupe as his first car in 1938. "It cost me £10 and a portable typewriter," he recalled.

"It was a four-cylinder car of some 16 brake horsepower with a wood and fabric body and still had its owner's manual — which contained instructions for getting to the factory at Ryton near Coventry."

"It had an annoying right-side handbrake, which made entry and exit a bit awkward. The brakes were individually adjusted by star wheels, the front being set to come on just before the rear. As the brakes also suffered from noisy juddering, emergency stops were something to be avoided. The previous owner had recommended and provided me with graphite powder to ease them."

"I did several trips from Kent to Cornwall in it, however, and even managed 50mph downhill. It gave me many happy hours of double de-clutching which stood me in good stead afterwards when the clutch cable snapped on more modern cars on two occasions."



Motoring memories: three-year-old Douglas Kaye Don Holland and his mother in his father's four-door Lea Francis outside their home in Devon

Mr Mortimer's story has a sad ending, however. The Hillman Segrave eventually ground to a halt, he was given a company car and the classic went to the scrapyard.

The hunt for the Lea-Francis Hyper, driven to victory in Ulster by Kaye Don, has produced an entertaining story, if not the car itself. Douglas Kaye Don Holland told us that his father, a garage owner between the world wars, was such a fan of famous racing drivers that he was named after the Ulster victor and his brother after Sir Malcolm Campbell. Holland even enclosed a photograph of himself, aged three, with his

mother in a four-door Lea-Francis his father had owned. The historic Lea-Francis has just been restored by Barry Price at his Warwick workshop and is set to join a cavalcade of former Le Mans entries which will lap the circuit before this year's race on June 15/16.

"It looks better than new," a proud Mr Alexander said. "I didn't buy it because of its provenance; it was the sort of car available for a young man to buy in 1950 when I purchased it because there was a long wait for new cars and they were too expensive. I only learnt its history later."

The Lea-Francis had won

'It still had its owner's manual — with instructions for getting to the factory at Ryton'

the 1.5-litre class in the 1929 race and finished eighth overall, with drivers Peacock and Newsome aboard. It was then bought by a wool merchant from Huddersfield but had done a low mileage when Mr Alexander purchased it. "I was at university and

used it as my daily transport and I also did speed trials and rallies in it," he said. "I then embarked on a career and had no time for such frivolities and the car was neglected. But 18 months ago I entrusted it to Barry Price and now plan to treasure it because it is unique: the only surviving Le Mans Lea-Francis in the world."

He and his car will be invited to join the display of Coventry cars planned in the city on August Bank Holiday Monday by the local museum. For its part, the museum has received a tempting invitation from a Car 96 reader, Norman Milne, of Kinghorn, Fife, is offering two rare Coventry-built cars to the mu-

seum on extended loan: a 1949 Hillman Minx Phase III saloon and a 1953 Sunbeam Talbot 90 Mark IIA sports saloon.

"The Hillman is the very first production Phase III off the line at Ryton in late 1948, the wide, full-width, curved screen model, not the prewar refresh of 1948, and is incredibly rare," he said.

"The Sunbeam is a significant Coventry car, being the outright winner of the 1955 Monte Carlo Rally, and although the New Lanark car museum in Scotland would like to take the car, it would be far more appropriate to have it on permanent display in Coventry."

Where is George Formby's favourite?

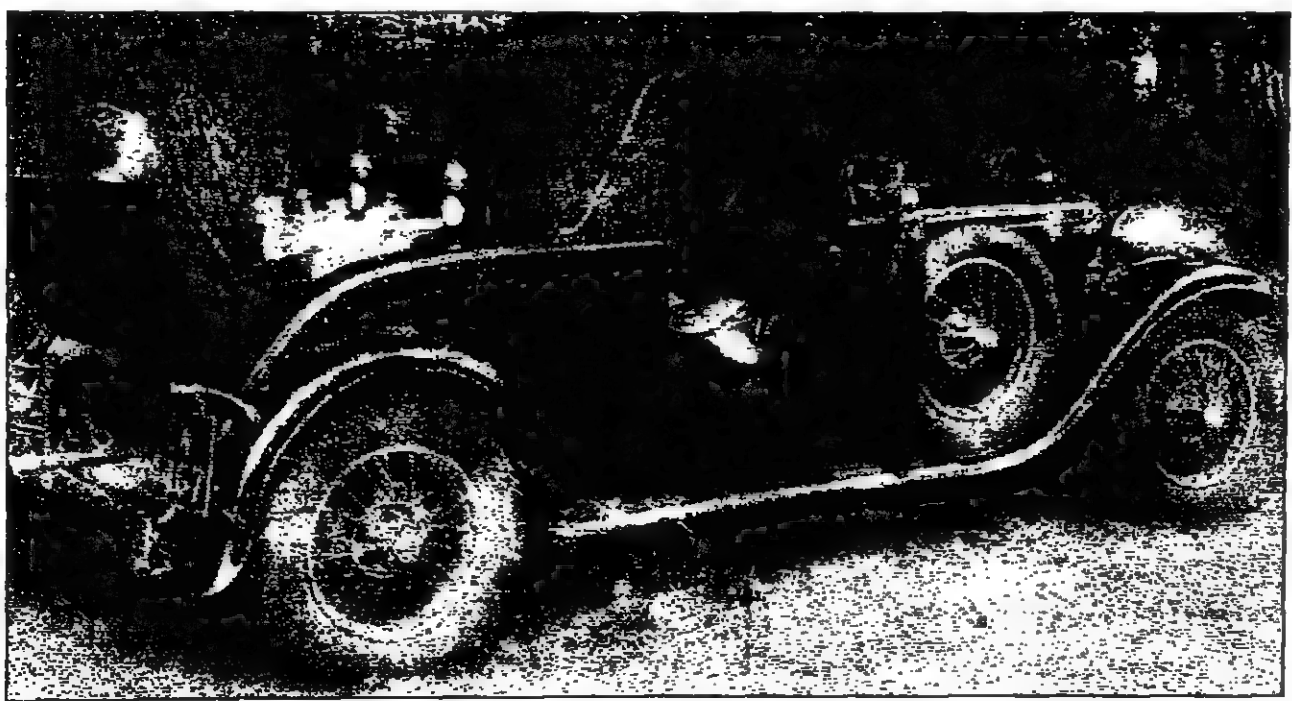
ALTHOUGH the name Hillman may be more familiar than the other two marques we chose for our first search for Coventry's lost cars, the model we illustrated, the Straight 8 Segrave, is proving elusive, writes Alan Capps.

The model was apparently named after the great racing driver Sir Henry Segrave after he had been impressed by one of the company's four-cylinder cars at the 1927 Olympia Motor Show.

Our quest has brought forth a host of entertaining anecdotes and photographs, not least that supplied by Roger Cooper of Rickmansworth, Herts. The photograph shows his mother enjoying what he describes as "a fairly alcoholic picnic" in the back of such a car she owned in the 1930s.

"The car was constructed by my grandfather, Tom Owen, who was one of many small one-man-band coachbuilders at the time," says Mr Cooper. "His premises were in Park Crescent Mews, London W1 and the car was made for Mr Justice Sachs. My mother purchased it in 1934. She ran it for two or three years before selling it in favour of a Riley Kestrel saloon, presumably my fault!"

The registration UW 4467 is



Taking a back seat: Roger Cooper's mother relaxes in her Hillman Straight 8 Segrave after a "fairly alcoholic picnic"

clear on the original photograph and may give readers a clue to its fate. Mr Cooper says he believes the car was the undoing of the Hillman company because they were venturing into a luxury market with which they were not

familiar. In 1928 the company merged with its neighbour, Humber, and two years later both became part of the Rootes Group.

Other sightings of the Segrave Hillman come from Leyland, Lancs, in the 1960s,

and we are checking on one in Essex which was due to be put on the market this month.

One celebrity owner of such a car was the comic singer George Formby. "Around 1928/29 he was appearing at a theatre in Salford, Lancashire,

and lived in Blackpool. Every night after the show he drove home to Blackpool, which was considered very daring in those days. I spoke to him one night and he said it was the best car in the world," reports Mr F.B. Greaves of Anglesey.

Outstanding names

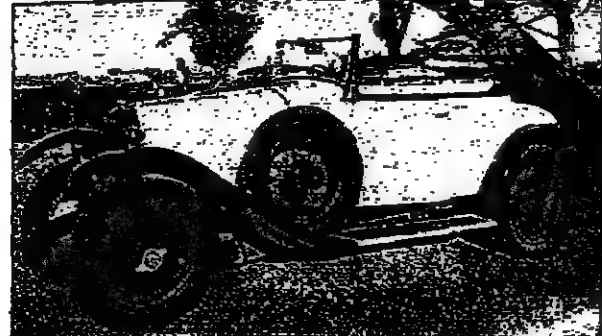
THIS is the British Museum of Road Transport's list of companies set up to make cars in Coventry with approximate date of manufacture. Examples of those in bold are known to exist; any clues about others would be welcome. Write to Coventry Cars, Car 96, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 5N1.

Academy 1905-08; Acme 1919; Aircraft 1923-30; Albion 1923-24; Allard 1909-02; Alpha 1903-14; Alvis 1920-57; Andy Rouse 1963-; Arden 1912-16; Ariel 1922-25; Armstrong-Siddley 1919-60; Arrol 1906; Aurora 1903-04; Auto Forge 1967-; Autovox 1937-38; Avelon 1926-30; B & A 1937-38; Barnett 1926-30; Berrill 1926-30; Beeston 1938; Belling 1900; Brancroft 1926-30; British Motor Co 1898; British Motor Traction 1900-18; Broadway 1913; Brooks 1902; BSA; Buckingham 1913-28; Calcraft 1913-28; Carbodies 1943-; Carlton 1901-02; Centaur 1900-01; Challenge 1919-25; Chota 1913; Clarendon 1902-03; Clarendon 1906-14; Climax (White & Poppe) 1905-07; Cluley 1922-28; Condon 1907; Cooper 1919-23; Corbett 1904-08; Coulter 1922; Coventry Motor 1898-1900; Coventry-Premier 1913-23; Coventry-Victor 1926-37; Crawford 1901; Crouch 1912-22; Curand 1906-10; Daimler 1897-; Daisy 1926-30; Dalton & Wade 1906-10; Davidson 1926-30; Dawson 1906-10; Deasy 1908-11; Doherty 1906-10; Duryea 1902-08; Dutton-Ward 1906-10; Eagle 1912-13; Emms 1922-23; Endurance 1898-01; Ferguson 1924-; Forge 1923-05; Forster 1904-05; Gannard & Bloomfield 1894-95; Glover 1912-13; Godwin 1900-01; Greaves 1906-10; Great Horseless Carriage 1898-98; Hamilton 1906-10; Hill 1922-30; Hillman 1907-78; Hobart-Bird 1906-10; Hotchkiss 1920; Humber 1906-10; Humber 1898-1968; Hurley 1906-10; Jager 1904-07; Jaguar 1945-; Lady 1892; Lancashire 1900-55; Lea-Francis 1900-44; Lee-Stroger 1904; Lee-Eddis 1926; Linds 1908-12; Marley & Buckingham 1912-13; Maxwell 1919-25; Meadows 1902-23; MMC 1898-04; Moore & Owen 1906-10; Morris 1913-82; Motor Radiator 1912; Neville Sinclair 1906-10; New Beeston 1898; Noble 1919-25; Norton 1913; Oranga 1925-27; Payne & Baines 1900-01; Premier 1912-14; Priday 1901-05; Progress 1898-05; Righton 1899; Ranger 1913-14; Record 1906; Remington 1926-30; Rex 1901-14; Riley 1901-07; Riley 1904-36; Rover 1904-; Rudge 1912-13; Ryder 1900-44; Ryley 1901-02; Shamrock 1900; Siddley, Siddley-Deasy 1912-19; Singer 1902-06; Standard 1903-43; Stoneham 1901; Stoneleigh 1912-24; Sturtevant 1909-12; Superior 1905-40; Sweeney 1925-45; Swift 1930-31; Talbot 1909-44; Taylor-Swift 1913; Titan 1911; Triumph 1923-4; Vitor 1902-04; Vernon 1906-10; Viking 1914; Warwick 1925-30; West-Aster 1904-14;

SURGICAL OPERATION ON A RARE BODY OF WORK

THIS immaculate 1923 3-litre Bentley can add something to Coventry's motoring history which even the city's experts did not know. It is one of just 14 with bodywork made by Carbodies of Coventry, a firm whose main business now is to produce the black taxi cab.

Bentley went to 30 different companies for the bodywork for its classic cars, with Vanden Plas the most renowned, and this may be the only one with Carbodies coachwork still in existence. It has been lovingly rebuilt by Noel Pizey of Bath, who used his skill as a surgeon to take the car completely apart, bolt by bolt, apart from the gearbox. The chassis was shot-blasted, new piston rings provided for the engine and the car



Noel Pizey's 1923 Bentley: a surprise for the experts

repainted in its original cream colour.

"I bought it in 1957 to get me to and from work and paid only £175 because dealers thought the design of these cars rather uninteresting," he said. "I used it every day for years, but now that it is insured for £100,000 I don't take it out too often."

"One of the highlights of the year, however, is when we join the Bentley drivers' club outing to Brittany, where this picture was taken. It continues to run beautifully and needs just half a turn to start."

In its early days, Carbodies also made coachwork for Rolls-Royce.

A CLULEY THAT BECAME A FAMILY CAR AGAIN

OF ALL the cars being hunted by Coventry's motor historians, the Cluley has turned up almost in abundance, writes Tony Dawe. Nine are known to exist, including one jointly owned by the company founder's grandson and his cousin.

John and Richard Cluley are carrying out a major service so that the car can appear in rallies this summer. They can also offer historians something extra: a fascinating insight into the story of the company.

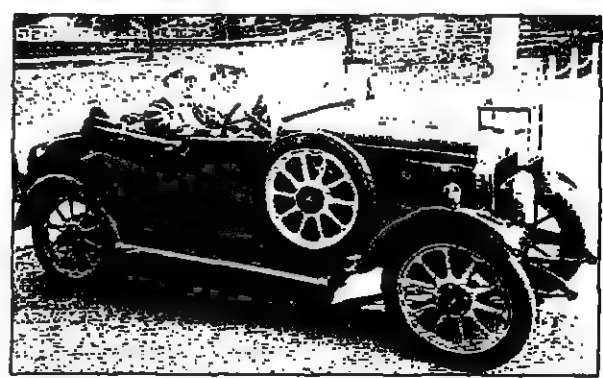
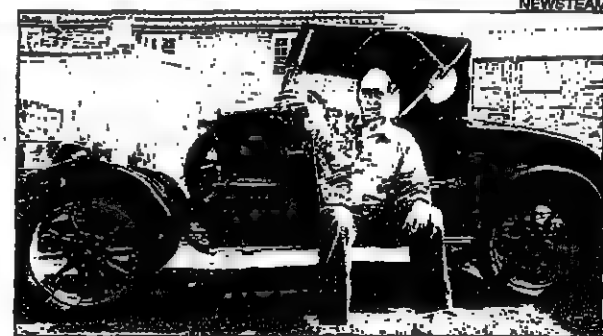
While the Cluleys can tell their personal story, the man with all the facts is Roger Armstrong of Esher, Surrey, who has produced the *Cluley News*, a 12-page newsletter with details of the nine cars in existence, and an article from *The Motor* of September 15, 1920, about the first 10 horsepower model produced.

His research shows that none of the surviving cars is in the hands of the original owners, including the 1924 two-seater 10 horsepower bought by John Cluley. "I had never seen one and had no idea what the cars looked like when I joined grandfather's company in the 1950s, when it was making gearing and transmission components for helicopters," John recalled.

"I was born in 1939, a long time after the last car had been made, and all the records and designs had been destroyed in the blitz. So you can imagine my delight when I saw one advertised somewhere in Doncaster in a motoring magazine. The asking price was £60 and I arranged to go and see it."

"I was young and inexperienced in those days and introduced myself straight away as Mr Cluley, at which point the price went up to £120. I felt a bit of a fool, but was so proud to see the car that I bought it and towed it back to the Midlands. It was not in running order and the bodywork was poor, but with some professional help we smartened it up and used it for advertising in the factory."

After selling the company in the late 1980s, the Cluleys decided to rebuild the car



Richard Cluley with the family car under restoration, top, and with his cousin, John, in the 1990 Shakespeare run

and Richard now looks after it. "It has performed excellently in several rallies and is a very good car which should be kept in running order," he said. "It was going very well last year, but I was not entirely satisfied with it. I have found one or two original bits and, as it is eight years since the rebuild, decided to have some major work carried out to make it even better."

THEIR grandfather set up the company at the Globe Works, Coventry, in 1895 with a partner called Clarke who stayed with the firm for only a short time. "My grandfather became friendly with the Courtauld family and when they were short of money helped them through difficult times," John said. "His reward was a contract to make textile machinery components for Courtaulds. "In the early 1900s, Clarke Cluley began making Globe bicycles and I was told that a young William Morris used to travel from Oxford to buy them to sell in his shop. The company went on to make a tricycle called a Cymocar and entered the car market in 1920 when my father,

Charles, and uncle Norman joined the firm."

"By 1928, hundreds of cars had been made, but by then people like Morris were making similar cars at a lower price. Unlike many other Coventry carmakers, grandfather saw the light and pulled out of the motor business before losing all his money and went on to make components for Rolls-Royce aeroplanes."

"The company moved to Kenilworth during the blitz, but later returned to a home on the Coventry trading estate. After the family sold it, the company struggled to survive and is now in receivership. Armstrong added that Clarke Cluley was an unusual car company because it tried to make everything, including engines, in-house instead of buying in ready-made parts. "The Cluley is a very robustly-built light car of conventional design, well-engineered and of the utmost simplicity," he said. "Hand-built in small batches, it could not hope to compete with the larger manufacturers whose cars were very similar but cheaper and better equipped."

CAR 96

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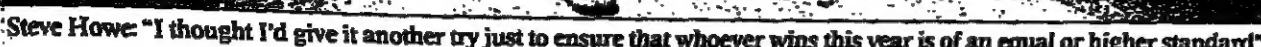
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He wants companies to realise that better-trained drivers could reduce accidents and injuries, bringing huge benefits both in keeping employees at work and cost savings.

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le and his flying partner in



Brian Lecomber and his De Tomaso Pantera: "It is a classic of its era, the original box-o'-bits special. Even people at the factory will agree there is no such thing as a standard specification"

which he still owns, Brian has run other XKs, a 1987 Chevrolet Corvette and a Lamborghini Jalpa. The latter, sadly, was somewhat under-used during his 18 months as its

Introduced to the UK in 1972, although very few were sold with right-hand drive, the Pantera offered a combination

With a good support network, and parts available from the United States, the Pantera seemed perfect. Well, almost. "I eventually found one of the rare right-hookers, and it did look beautiful, but

admits that "there is no such thing as too much power." Neither does he feel guilty about customising a classic, arguing that half of the Panteras in the owners' club have been modified in one way or another.

"The steering rack on mine, for example, comes from a left-hand drive Austin Allegro; other Panteras probably have something else. De Tomaso just fitted what they felt worked well at the time and as owners we are simply continuing the tradition."

A According to Rover, this reorganisation "will create a business in which premium-positioned cars are sold through premium outlets seeking lifetime relationships with customers".

A Rover is now owned by BMW and they have made clear they want to concentrate on luxury models

rather than competing head-on with the mass producers. They expect to see Rover's market share in Britain fall from 13 per cent last year to between 9 and 10 per cent. The crucial model, the first developed with BMW, will be introduced in 1998 to replace the 600 and 800 ranges.

The participants in the Camel Trophy are struggling through the vilest slop that Indonesia can offer. Despite months of selections and training, none of the teams can have anticipated the hideousness of building bridges over mosquito-infested waters in 43C. At that temperature, even a game of low-stakes backgammon will have armpits glowing.

Bodies have become noticeably more defined over this first week, as the teams heave

bridging ladders and push 2½ tons of laden Land Rover Discoverys up inclines that are normally only seen in cartoons. However, the fitness has a price. Trench foot, viral infections, sunburn and even flu have been treated by the convoy's doctor.



The gross mugginess of the jungle is alien to many teams, including the British. John Leach and William Tapley arrived in Balikaapan on the far east of Borneo, expecting it to be hot, but not fried-eggs-on-a-bonnet sweltering. Nevertheless, they managed to

pack the Discovery with a speedy efficiency. The sight of nearly 40 Camel-branded Land Rovers was unusual for a hotel car park, and especially so for the local children, who thronged around each car demanding trophy stickers. Teenage girls who had

After a day of special tasks upon which the mildly competitive element of this event is based, the convoy started its 1,150-mile journey. Leach and Tapley had wired in a stereo

so we rocked and rolled to a river crossing that lasted 12 hours and ended at 4.30am. The boatman earned as much in those hours as he would have done in two years. The villagers watched in disbelief as team members stood up to their chests in the fetid river, directing a delicate loading operation on to the ferry.

Attempting to stay clean is near impossible. Mud cakes us and the vehicle floor, old boil-in-the-bags float in the mud and litter luggage lock-

Despite appearances, the Discovery performs excellently. On Wednesday, Tapley gunned the vehicle through crater-lined roads at an extraordinary pace. Then at the end of the day, he nearly

managed to lose it on a rickety bridge. As he accelerated over the bamboo slats, the rear-left wheel crunched through, leaving several feet of chasm yawning expectantly. Thanks to the efforts of all the teams, the car was eventually winched across.

By Thursday, the convoy was already behind schedule. Because the rains were so violent, many bridges have been washed away. These need to be rebuilt or an alternative route found.

On Easter Monday we had another narrow escape. As the vehicle proceeded down a washed-out road, the sand surface gave way, leaving the right hand side virtually in thin air. Again, it was only winching and snatching that averted an early flight home.



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